

CINEMA

Papers

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Image from *The Incredible Mr. Limpet* (1970)





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SCREWBALL IN THE BACK

The second decade of Cary Grant, casual as will refer to past without a firm line with retrosits. It seems simply, logically, unconsciously the right thing to do. It's ludicrous in a way of the casual as whole Grant, even in 11, reached the limits of so many. His death raised one's feelings in the manner that one is compelled to the bedside of a dying comrade, relative or lover.

They isn't the sense that with the passing of Grant, an era in movie history has respectfully been laid to rest—that era had indeed passed by long ago. It's just that there are those of us who always found something comforting in the thought that this man still walked this earth. This is not too difficult to comprehend, after all, isn't there the story told of John F. Kennedy, who, it is said, would call Cary Grant on the phone, particularly in times of stress, and ask him to "Say something, anything. I just want to hear your voice?"

It didn't seem to matter much that there was no longer any film starring Cary Grant after 1960, but strange as it may sound, there has always been a longing for Cary Grant, and I'm sure there has always been an audience. For after '60 what we seemed to do was to appreciate a man more acutely and profoundly than we ever did his films. I can still recall how appropriate I thought it was that Cary Grant should be on the board of directors of Polony's Committee rather than making films. I couldn't immediately discern why I thought so, a just left right. It seemed that he had caught the right moment to opt out of the movies.

But in spite of not playing the screen, he had really opt out? When came closest immediately to mind was the resolution of Cary Grant as the head of a beauty salon in *Ros and Mike Up*, Cary Grant as a figure in the diplomatic corps in *Howards*, and Cary Grant as an executive outwitting through the Madison Avenue crowd in *North by Northwest*. Whenever we confront Cary Grant, it seems we are always drawing ourselves for being so slow, and each time we can just imagine Grant smiling, as self-moved, becoming in a repeated side glance.

I have never been able to decide if I discovered Cary Grant with Len McCamp's *The Awful Truth*, or whether I discovered *The Awful Truth* through Cary Grant. I was curiously aware of him before seeing *The Awful Truth*, through some of his films as interviews, particularly those late in his career and particularly those of Hitchcock. Yet, if it was watching Cary Grant which led me to discover the genius of American romantic comedies, I believe it was, undoubtedly, *The Awful Truth* that made me really discover Cary Grant.

While on the subject, in the dark, watching a movie, have you ever felt you were in league with a particular figure up on the screen? That there was some special rapport between you and that particular figure, that you sensed that figure smiling at you, nodding you, unconsciously teasing you, but when coming down close and whispering "Now just watch this", or "Can you believe this?" I felt this special rapport to that

time I saw *The Awful Truth*, and it seems tied to this successive viewing.

In the first of the "My Dynamic Hero Shows With The Wind" sequences in *The Awful Truth*, a slightly embarrassed and somewhat despondent Jerry Warshaw (Cary Grant) has just lost the (it is usual to be as wife as he ("Not wife as he"), it could only happen in screwballs), Lucy (Joan Dunson), as she and her rich boyfriend Daniel Lennox (Ralph Bellamy) are conducting a film scene on the dance floor. Then, without a word, the wife twitches as a jerkback. Jerry's head pops up in two swift moves, he draws a chair closer into the camera, he scrunches up, and a glorious, gleaming smile spreads across his face for us to take in and cherish forever. It is just for us, as he and we together witness the

curdling effect of Danoff's champagne joust-bugging and Lucy's indignation. Jerry wins by a knockout. But no, it isn't it and there. Jerry's a truce. He's telling us it was fun, so why not do it again. Just before Lucy and Daniel are about to step out of the stage, he dips the wife a ball and the band starts up again. Too late.

The image of Cary Grant could never be lost on anyone who has seen *The Awful Truth* (it certainly wasn't lost on Stanley Cavell. Cavell pays loving tribute to the man by speaking his book as what he calls the fully-fledged comedy of misadventure, *The Pursuit Of Happiness*, with this very image of Cary Grant, so which he adds the following passage. "This man, in words of Emerson's, carries the holiday in his eye, in a fit he suited the pace of millions."



Cary Grant and Grant under a certain amount of pressure

POCKET: Cary Grant 1904-1986

Carell, probably more than anyone else, obviously seemed to know implicitly what he was doing and saying, for this loving tribute also reminds us of the fact that we would never, ever, have appreciated American screwball to the extent that we do if it were not for the ingenuity of Cary Grant. (You sure we're still so foolishly comprehensively all the flip backs, look backs, and eye popping, the fly immersion and over-the-shoulder poses in dialogue.)

Brewing himself down into the camera, close to his subject, in the hallway of Cary Grant's room. I believe it was Katherine Hepburn who had said, "Cary Grant is a personality constantly functioning." It is certainly no longer surprising that only his presence was not necessary to make for the most areas of screen

moments. He need only be there for logical legitimacy to arrange him, for Cary Grant, or for Cary Grant Kelly to make up to him, about his film, and then immediately to follow him, far more in the Cary Grant's. We may be surrounded at Grant's extraordinary poverty in these moments, yet it was clearly understood that he was their agent. Only Cary Grant could walk away unperturbed, with a smile that told us that he knew full well why Kelly and Hepburn were doing it.

Indeed, it was later in his career that the movie finally caught up with Cary Grant. They became more explicitly conscious of "Cary Grant", of the special suggest that Grant could come from his audience. Consider the famous exchange (in dialogue) in the back of the bus in *The Caddy* (1957) John Hodge (Cary Grant) turns away from the bus window, sure that he has eluded the police for the moment, and casts a glance to his right at the woman with the long hair, he shifts over to his left and casts a glance at the man at the window himself, and then casts a knowing glance to the camera. We may be looking out for that slender, pretty figure, but I cannot recall any other Hepburn film where an image was given focus not to be sufficient to Hepburn's presence. In Stanley Donen's *Charade*, Audrey Hepburn is speaking not only for herself when she tells Grant, "Do you know what's wrong with you?" To which she also provides the answer, "Nobility." In *North by Northwest*, Hepburn's own eyes show the actress and her in a dramatic scene as she waits that follows Grant's confinement to his hospital room. He escapes through the window, onto the ledge, and then through a window and another room, showing his female occupant. She is short-tempered. His answer is put her at ease but is cut short. She does not let him go, because: and does not need to let her more than a simple "Don't."

At the 1976 Academy Awards, Frank Sinatra presented Cary Grant with a special Oscar for his overall film acting achievements, saying, "Cary made it all look so easy." Yet for many years, Grant has been quoted as claiming that the only role he ever played was "Cary Grant" and that was the toughest thing to do. I do not think we could ask for anything more. In the especially magnificent play "Chances and the Man" (Pitts Concert, v. 30 a 11 in Feb 1962), David Thomson was the "beast" from *Heaven's* *My Girl Friday*, which doesn't quite catch us adequately taking a jump backstage, for it's an isolated, chilling place that must from backstage. It's the moment, just as Walter Burns (Cary Grant) and Kelly Johnson (Katharine Hepburn) are having to face the prospect of imprisonment, when Walter solemnly says, "The last time to say that to me was Arthur Leach, just a week before he cut his throat." We say for that moment was to relieve the mystery just because the surface, only that we are not going to be allowed to — for there is no mystery. Roger G. Thorpe's *North by Northwest*. What's the O and don't nothing. I realize now why Grant considered himself the toughest thing to do.

In *Monterey* (1960), doesn't Hawks give something of a reprieve to the Arthur Leach last



Made by Northwest

from *My Girl Friday*, with an opening that recalls that of Hawks' earlier *Bringing Up Baby*, also with Grant? As the credits are rolling, Hawks' magnificent manner, "Then come Cary," is heard each time the actor almost comically takes his cue ahead of time. Hawks could not be more pointed: what the instant times in the eye, as we so often the credit sequence as a bit of self-referential address on Hawks' part, as we witness *Heaven's* (Katharine Hepburn) attempts at going for almost modest Professor to show the front door with him at the outside as they can stand their engagement with Hank (Hepburn).

We could try to tear our way through, but what would be the point? Not submerged, but before us, stands Cary Grant. Could we really ask for anything more?

By David Ogden



Off camera



The Philadelphia Story (above), *Monkey Business* (middle), *The Caddy* in *Grant's* (below)

MONEY-GO-ROUND: What's the picture for the AFC loan bank plan?

In April this year, the Australian Film Commission (AFC) is due to report to government with recommendations on the future direction of the Australian film industry. "The contents and the timetable depend on the industry," says AFC policy adviser David Court. "We've put forward quite a radical proposal, but without strong and widespread support it will be much easier for the government just to do nothing." One thing that everyone agrees on is that "nothing" would be disastrous for the health of Australian film.

The AFC is a law paper advocated the setting up of a government-backed loan corporation to replace the 1984 tax shelter. The AFC argues that the government's attitude in tax relief and the new marginal tax rates now make 1984 an unrealistic basis for the film industry. The question is what to put in its place that is acceptable to government and to the industry (offering seeds of the film community).

In general, the proposal has met with qualified rather than enthusiastic support. The chairman of the Screen Production Association of Australia (SPAA), Ross Danvers, says: "It does at least recognise that you have to put out there and sell to make our industry as an industry. But I'd be very surprised if SPAA wholeheartedly supported it." The ABC's Angela White, executive officer of the Australian Writers Guild (AWG), says the guild has no reservations about the plan, but considers that one of its positive elements is that it would ensure much more careful scrutiny of budgets.

The AFC's second supplementary paper on industry assistance sets out in a little more detail how their finance corporation model would work. It is an attempt to address some of the problems and questions that were immediately raised when the paper came out.

It has been said for example that a capital loan bank would be too much like single-source film financing, making subjective judgements about the kinds of films that are made.

The supplementary paper argues that a loan fund of \$120 million is substantial enough to finance 30 to 40 producers a year. This scale of lending provides a comparison with a film commission. Rather than selectively picking winners, the corporation's task will be to finance an industry with a production slate worth at least \$120 million annually.

In making decisions the corporation will have in front of it a production budget figure representing proven (bankable) commercial interest and a third figure representing additional estimated returns. The first two can be directly related to profit can be calculated, and, in practice, assigned. There is some doubt involving a much lesser degree of subjectivity than is inherent in fund-

ing decisions based on perceived quality or cultural merit.

The AFC just limited water "taps" against the possibility of arbitrary decisions. It proposes lending guidelines that would qualify a project with previous or distribution guarantees for a loan equal to the amount of those guarantees. (In the analogous insurance policy and syndicate special effects are knocked back for by two American majors.)

In granting the fact that the film is still untested, credit a double default in marketing. In the worst case, it will tend to skew production away from high risk theatrical markets to more predictable formula-driven, ancillary market, essentially home video.

Ross Danvers agrees that the Screen Production Fund (proposed to \$10 million) and the small option plan should be able to cater to a number of more adventurous more difficult to sell films, and that setting aside the loan fund for untested budget would be a form of direct funding, which I thought everyone would like.

David Court says that the AFC would be prepared to consider covering a portion of the fund for unsecured loans. No one's yet proposed a figure, but I think it's better to look at a minimum, and only for low to medium budget theatrical features and documentaries. It wouldn't be an option for television projects.

Another place at which many groups, such as distributors, is the degree of Australian content that will be guaranteed under the new system. Both Equity and the Australian Writers Guild see this as an important concern. The AFC proposes that the existing 1984 requirements be maintained, but that non-Australian elements in a production should not be eligible for loan assistance unless there are "exceptional circumstances." Ross Danvers regards the provision as discretionary and considers the 1984 provisions for Australian content more than adequate. "Why penalise people further?" he asks.

Producer Tony Ginnery is not surprisingly critical of the plan to withhold loan funds from overseas producers' elements. He is also sceptical about the term that is used, "exceptional circumstances." Ross Danvers regards the provision as discretionary and considers the 1984 provisions for Australian content more than adequate. "Why penalise people further?" he asks.

One refined proposal that has been considered by a number of industry groups is that a certain amount of the fund should be set aside for projects that do not have previous. A paper prepared by a group of Melbourne independent producers suggests that 25 per cent would be an appropriate figure, arguing that a reliance on previous encourages conservatism in film



SEARCHING A KILLING: Stealing Haydon and Marie Windsor work out their production budget

and content, and considerable backlash that overseas elements will be introduced.

In the AFC's first discussion paper this issue was raised. "Preselling tends to look best for conventional films with proven elements," it stated. "It is worth recalling that 250 years, with its then irregular financial history (and innovative special effects) was knocked back for by two American majors." In granting the fact that the film is still untested, credit a double default in marketing. In the worst case, it will tend to skew production away from high risk theatrical markets to more predictable formula-driven, ancillary market, essentially home video.

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that the return of a 10% bank with 30% return share capital and the capacity to launch a bond issue per year of up to \$120 million may be unrealistic and unappealing to government. Doubling some government bondings will already have been made, but with economists and bankers pressing the government for a real issue in interest, when the sort of return shareholders would require for those above bonds must be higher than acceptable. It may be that as little as \$40 million could be raised. How this amount is to be determined by the treasurer annually. One should make one's own assessment of the treasurer's attitude to the film industry. I don't see that the initial target for 1987-88 was approved and raised. I am no reason to assume, based on the track record of government bodies to date, that the film bank would not either run out of funds in year two or three, or alternatively would need a further capital injection which may or may not be forthcoming.

According to the AFC, a sinking fund payment of 10% interest would be sufficient to support annual rates of \$120 million. That model, developed in conjunction with Cooper and Lybrand/PWD Scott assumes new loans each year totaling \$120 million divided equally between theatrical and television products. The loans are scheduled to match the projected income stream over a five-year period, no further income is assumed. Interest on the principal is paid from the income stream with the same paid (and pre-paying) applying to each. The best debt rate for theatrical product is 40 per cent, for TV documentaries 30 per cent and for documentaries 70 per cent.

It should be noted that these projected rates of return assume that low budget films which need a high degree of support will be financed through the loan fund. The model also assumes that overall production budgets will be lower, because the high financing charges associated with 1984 will be minimised.

As for the doubts expressed about government response the AFC argues that a united industry view would add weight to the film bank proposals. If the general attitude towards the bank is unfavourable, the AFC claims, the government would be in the position of having to choose between real sources of advice.

FUND'S OVER: The Women's Film Fund gets the wind-up

The activities of the Women's Film Fund will effectively be scaled down over the next three and a half years with operation of the fund ceasing in 1990. A statement released in February by the Australian Film Commission (AFC), the organisation responsible for the fund since 1980, suggests there is no longer a need for a discrete funding programme for women within the Commission.

It is expected that the direction of the fund is going to move towards assisting women in the industry and the independent sector and that eventually government agencies (like the Australian Film Television & Radio School (AFTRS), independent areas of the AFC (eg the Creative Development Institute, CDI) and the industry in general) assume responsibility for reducing inequalities in employment and opportunities of women.

The director of the CDI, Megan McMuntry, said that it is "absolutely self-evident" that the shift occurred.

There is a danger of helping out on the WFF. The time has come for this industry as a whole to see how women stand. The WFF once had an important practical and symbolic function but there have been significant changes since the fund was first established in 1976.

She identified the importance of setting up a number of women's

lobby groups backed up by continuing initiatives at the AFC. An up-bell of the 1983 'Survey of Women in Australian Film Production' (which found that women were under-represented in key creative and technical areas) in the film and television industry is due for release soon and is likely to provide substantial ammunition for women's groups according to McMuntry.

The budget of the WFF will remain at its current level of \$150,000 and a new manager is to be appointed. The existing manager, Beth McEwen, is taking up a position at Open Channel.

She is concerned the WFF has become viewed as a 'beginners' fund' an avenue for women with little or no track record in film-making. As McEwen said, "In the past it was important to give as many women as possible small amounts of money to try out their skills." However, part of the new package involves the investment of larger sums of money in two or three projects a year to assist more experienced women producers or directors. Although it will not be exclusively limited to women, the middle level is a priority designed to give women the means to produce their own work.

The fund will also encourage the establishment of small production groups for women in regional areas and women from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly regional or Aboriginal women, will continue to receive funding.

A series of seminars on film-making are planned as well as workshops in technical areas like computer editing and video post production for women working in the industry. A girls in schools' education programme to encourage young girls working in the industry in different areas of film and television industry will be introduced.

According to McMuntry, these programmes will be monitored over the first year period and it is possible

initiatives are working well they may be taken up by the AFC affirmative action office.

The change to WFF policy has already begun and discarding a marginal woman is the thinking community in particular the new trend system of funding. There is concern that while some women have established themselves in the industry, valuable experience the WFF should be denied to younger women.

McMuntry notes that with more women doing industry study there is less pressure on the AFC to provide training opportunities. Others feel that access to lobby institutions is only open to a small number of women and the need for the WFF remains.

The conclusion that appears to have been drawn from the AFC's review of the WFF is that economic equity can be found in the market place, if not now at least by 1990 and that government assistance will be given in the most generalised form.

According to McMuntry, the number of women receiving funding through the CDI and the No Film Fund continues to increase all the time. Circumstances have changed and women don't seem to have problems getting access to these markets. She said that in the AFC's affirmative action policy (approved late last year) not only monitors employment but funding practices guaranteeing continued opportunities for women beyond the life of the WFF.

There are many who will ask whether the very picture painted by the AFC is all that rosy and, whether women's earnings in the industry at these points will really find themselves competing on an equal basis with men, whether the WFF will have any credibility without a production arm.

Indeed many will be left wondering how a delineated period for the termination of the fund can be set when there is so little evidence to suggest that all will be well in 1990.

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BRIEFLY...

■ **Victoria's State Film Centre** begins a new programming policy from 12 March. The centre will screen up to five new movies per cinema and weekend matinees. *My Life Without Sex* and *General Mando* will have new Melbourne premiere screens on 12 March. The two business leader State Film Centre management will continue to be available for hire by the public but the State Film Theatre will be available during office hours only.

■ The South Australian History and Film Conference will be held at the University of Queensland at Lucas, from 2 to 6 December this year. Its theme is:

"Constructing and deconstructing the images of the Australian nation: the Southern film and television industry 11 May. For further information and offers of papers or assistance contact the Australian Studies Centre, University of Queensland, St Lucia, 4067 on (07) 377 1111.

■ **This year's round of movie musical shows has resulted in a substantial reorganisation of Australia's independent ownership patterns. This is how it looked in mid-February, but the game is not necessarily over yet.**

Channel 5
QTV Melbourne — Alan Bond
TCN Sydney — Alan Bond
RTN Perth — Alan Bond
QTV Brisbane — Alan Bond
NBS Adelaide — Broadcast Investments (Laurie Lantry)

Channel 7
HSV Melbourne — Fairfax
ATN Sydney — Fairfax
BST Brisbane — Fairfax
ABC Adelaide — Equity Capital
TVR Perth — Robert Herbert & Co.

Channel 10
ATN Melbourne — Westfield Capital Corp
TCN Sydney — Westfield Capital Corp
NBS Adelaide — Bell Group
TVQ Brisbane — Centre Corp (Christopher Stone)

The new fourth station at Perth is owned by Henry Seligson, but is not competing yet. The 10 per cent interest in Griffiths Productions, now owned by Harold and Marjorie Lines through H&M, has gone to Fairfax.

■ **The Australian Film Institute** in association with the New Zealand Film Commission, will stage a major season of New Zealand cinema in film capital cities between March and May. The season includes 10 new features, several new documentaries and a range of shorts.

■ **Film Victoria's** new chairman is investment consultant Glenn Anderson, a member of the board since 1983. Supervisor Jan Davis and 10 other a sales and marketing director Nick McMahon are new appointments to the board, with actress Sissy Thornton and producer Roger La Masuren becoming full time members.



TOP DOG: Scenes from the only serious nod to Crocodile Dundee

NEW ZEALAND

BY MIKE NICOLAIDI

The dog has his day

Maurie Hills' animated feature *Footrot Flies*—A Cops 'n' Dogs picture and a guaranteed hit—has redefined the film business here.

Not only that, the movie instantly became the top grossing New Zealand feature, selling at all time a sparkling 100,000 (the local \$NZ\$1,400,000 gross of Geoff Murphy's *Goodbye Pork Pie* in 1986) but it has given impetus to a boom in the country's small and cinema scene. The old movie houses, all during the 1970s years of the first six film shows when Hollywood ruled, are selling on the effects of the video boom.

According to Larry Vels, general manager of the Kermode Odeon chain, distributors of *Footrot Flies*, several of these cinemas will still be showing. But for one great feature, even the movie business is being kept alive by the video boom. The picture has made it to 90's top 100 of the year.

In the first week of its release, off 26 prints, the Intrepid Productions animation grossed over \$NZ\$200,000—the biggest opening of any film from any source in New Zealand history. Fourteen house records were broken, including the Embassy Wellington Record for *Christy and the King of the Mountains* and a host of smaller, previously unbroken and lower, from Thames in the north to Gore in the south. Total admissions nationwide were 150,000. By mid-January, with all prints sold out, *Footrot Flies* was proving it had legs. It broke house records for third week runs in Wellington and Christchurch, mean-
while earning its money back.

Results producer John Garner, who has directed of *Footrot Flies* and heading for \$NZ\$2,500,000, also re-

ceived a pretty big cut. Two grossing NZ\$1 million in the home market after *Goodbye Pork Pie* in its feature's first A Hot Friday \$NZ\$1,000 and Roger Donaldson's *Death Wish* and Murphy's *Use and the Great Circle of Influence* \$NZ\$1,000.

Garner is proud that *Footrot Flies* success cleared some anxiety to the US market, where they were worried that New Zealand's animation film *Cartoonland* and *Headbush Ridge* and *Karen Kid* 2 might be delayed.

The problems were in the single cinema format. The exhibitors had to split ownership (distributed in some cases) by splitting screenings throughout the day between the home product and the import. A ban that has been some only American movies in the film *Warriors* have been in trouble to find out what's behind it all.

Garner is now looking towards a 50 print nationwide release in Australia and South through Hoyts. He

looks to find sponsors across the Tasman equivalent to the Bank of New Zealand, whose promotional efforts have helped the film along. He and copies, is very large (1000) and television campaign. Special *Footrot Flies* books which have sold around 70,000 copies have and soundtrack album \$NZ\$1,000 (also) will be distributed through Ray Books in Angus and Robinson Street and C&H, respectively.

A highly significant aspect of the animated feature's success is that it has been up against *Crocodile Dundee*. The Aussie blockbuster is being handled by Amalgamated Theatres, the second major New Zealand chain, which is paying a film rental rate of \$NZ\$2,000,000 over 12 months, which would make it the most successful picture ever in New Zealand.

As elsewhere around the globe, Kiwis are turning out for the first major international breakthrough

into the mass market by an Aussie film. But even so, *Footrot Flies* is keeping pace with it in two of the major cities, Wellington and Christchurch.

KO's Vels describes the two anti-podemic films as the best two ever to attract audiences over the important Christmas-New Year holiday period.

Interestingly, he says they both strike chords, supporting film business in this part of the world are finally moving from the economic to the basic, fundamentals of entertainment. Both are occupied both are comedies and both have generated an intense national interest.

While *Crocodile Dundee* has transcended its roots, it is not so sure how the rest of the world will take to *Dog and Wal*. Obviously it will strike chords in Australia, but it will take a while to spread outside.

In this continuing battle to counter the big imports being made into traditional movie going, by the home video breakthrough, Kermode Odeon and Amalgamated are buoyed by their summer success stories. John Maddison, managing director of Amalgamated, says his company, managed with all commercial, during 1986. While he says the country's cinema along the class are ignoring. He insists that cinema is still proven, not only while outlining new multiple centers for Hamilton (three screens), Christchurch (four) and Dunedin (three) in 1986, a new three-screen center opens in Wellington in March this year. The big movie sponsor for Amalgamated during 1986 was *City of Africa*, Top Gun, *Jaws* of the Nile, *Audrey Hepburn: A Room with a View* and *The Godfather Part II*.

For Kermode Odeon 1986 was average, says John Kermode, general manager of KJ's film chain. Holdings of Columbia, Warner Bros and Caramel produced the big movie with *The Jungle Book*, *Curse of the Cat*, *Debut Purple*, *House of the Dead*, *John Wolf* and *Raidy*.



In a windowless room in Waikiki, critics, comedians and filmmakers got together to discuss laughing matters. SANDRA HALL reports.

ON THE first day somebody quoted E.B. White's observation that "humour can be dissected as a frog can, but the thing dies in the process and the insiders are discouraging to try but the pure scientific mind." Yet the diverse assortment of filmmakers and academics taking part in the South Hawaii International Film Festival's symposium on *Humour in Cinema: East and West* bravely kept at it, wrangling up definitions of comedy, tracing cross-cultural links and political implications and analysing the process which occurs in the human brain when both as halves get together to decide something is funny.

Part of the pole in this very serious academic event of which is now established as a highly successful festival free screenings, a rich list of sponsors and a total audience of 90,000 is that it was being held in an appropriately windowless conference room at the basement of the Hyatt International, across the street from the sun and surf of Waikiki. Still, the participants — who included the critics Susan Sonntag, Donald Richie and Tony Rayns and the filmmakers Shasha Kopylov, Nagai Tass and Eddie Romero — did their best to lighten the atmosphere. Exasperated jokes were told, comic film clips screened in many languages (with necessary pauses for exposition) and a local academic wailed up his dissertation on the social psychology of humour by accompanying himself on the ukulele in a song about Freud.

Definitions of comedy abounded. Arthur Dauden, a history professor from Bryn Mawr and he admitted a veteran of humour conferences (three in comedy is tragedy that happens to somebody else) and Clive Rigney (British film studies player) put forward a list of targets which he suggested were traditionally funny to people of all cultures. These included "people and institutions to whom we give up freedom", people and institutions which cause tension and things we can't get enough of (these last two and whipping jokes).

Win time from Korea, China and the Philippines (prominent in the festival programme, politics was never far from

anybody's mind. Rice was the question of where humour ends and offensiveness begins. William Shakespeare's remark that all great humour is in bad taste was grasped at as if it were a lifeline and the Marx Brothers brought up to help keep it afloat ("Harpo could be condemned today for making fun of the handicapped. Chico for making fun of the female and Groucho for all kinds of transgressions. The only one to escape censure would be Zeppo who never made anybody laugh").

Others had their doubts. Some said they had been offended by Saul Man, the highly successful American comedy about a white Californian who takes tanning pills and pretends to be black so he can get into Harvard on a scholarship, and Susan Sonntag felt that humour in contemporary cinema, with its increasing emphasis on violence, could be leaving her behind, as, unlike so many of her friends, she found nothing even vaguely comic in either Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* or David Lynch's *Blue Velvet*.

There were papers on humour in Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Filipino and Australian films (presented by Nagai Tass) and a rather melancholy talk on humour in Korean cinema whose author Byung Sup Ahn, a critic and academic from the Seoul Institute of the Arts, confessed that not only was the concept of humour foreign to Korean movies, it was also absent from the Korean language. The years of Japanese Occupation followed by civil war had left the Koreans with very little to laugh about.

Conversely, the Filipino filmmaker Eddie Romero said the Japanese Occupation had served to sharpen the

Philippine interest in humour as a way of asserting national identity. Rejection of our conquerors was something that the comics could represent easily through farcical drama, but they had underlying troubles trying to find standards for distinguishing between grain and chaff in the work of our comedians who once imbued with the need to speak out on contemporary reality, did so with expensing wit and resourcefulness, managing for the most part to evade censorship and stem reprisal from the authorities by making the most of the public ambivalence of the Tagalog tongue, refined in the arts of equivocation through centuries of Colonial rule.

Chinese filmmakers too have traditionally resorted to subtlety to escape censorship according to Ma Ning, a Chinese critic of process working in Melbourne — not only in the use of humour in their films but in their way of avoiding ideological blame for anything judged subversive by maintaining that all their films are collectively produced.

The collaborative process, also talked in the paper given by Henry Shreene, whose work on cable television and songs for *The 51st Annual* and the *Albert Brooks* film *Real Life* have turned him into a cult comedian in the United States.

Shreene told her rising stories of being one of 18 writers on the *Lavigne* and *Shirley* show where the ethnophore was distinctly mechanistic. They had two teams of writers. One worked on the story — what the producers call "leaving post" — then another group came in on Wednesday and put in the plot. Barry Marshall, the producer, used to say things like "we gotta have that bit there so we can get the blow off at the end of Act I". I did it for 13 weeks. That was enough.

He talks that he cannot and that of most comedians in the

US is governed by one fundamental fact — "The more people you can speak to the less you can say". His answer to the problem has been his new cable TV series *Aladin* that presents the *History of White People in America* which gives him all the political range he wants and which puts the somewhere between the mass audience and the best post on the corner. But he finds it supremely ironic that top-censoring comics like Chevy Chase, who began as writers and not being asked to write their own film comedies.

"There's a major strain of film comedy in America which goes against the trend of content being censored. Except for Woody Allen and Mel Brooks, they've gone into the third temple, after to save souls. Cool in these people and something funny will happen."

American network television still looks political aware. "What is a done in Britain or one or more British people are employed to convey a sense of superiority. The US version of *Saturday Night* was all about American celebrities — watered down version of the real thing. As for the strong of film comedies aimed at the youth market. The kids sleep with by upending authority figures. That's not comedy it's fantasy. An authority that never exists is not a worthwhile enemy."

He thinks that the leftismness in relation to satire has as effect on the media and its relations with public and politicians. "A question is begged as nothing more than a cue for you to start speaking. There is no reason why what you say should have anything to do with what the other person says. Consequently, the public reaction to reporters who ask questions of the President that they expect him to answer is that they're being very rude."

In America you get all the raw material in the world but nothing to help you process it.



THE DINO FACTOR

Dino De Laurentiis is coming to town. DAVID HAY reports from Los Angeles on the operations of the man who produced *Five Branded Women*, *The Bible* and *Death Wish*.



THREE PAGES OF DINO: Dino De Laurentiis, Terry Jackson, managing

DINO DE LAURENTIIS may be remembered warmly by film buffs as the man who produced *La Strada* and *Nights of Cabiria*. More recently, American critics have taken offense in their praise of David Lynch's controversial hit film *Rain*. But the Dino De Laurentiis who is investing \$US15 million in a studio near Santa Barbara in Queensland is no longer strictly the producer of the ordinary. (De Laurentiis has made, according to our count, between 400 and 500 films.) Now he is at the head of a multi-layered film and TV company based in the US — the De Laurentiis Entertainment Group.

That DEG has come to the fore as one of Hollywood's most studios represents an ironic turn of events for the man who, in 1962 left Timespan selling the \$US14 million mansion in Beverly Hills. He had then decided to concentrate on his wife's shoe store in New York and on his studios in Wilmington, North Carolina.

In 1983, De Laurentiis returned with a flourish, paying \$US35 million to buy the relatively small Embassy Pictures from Coca-Cola. He at first wanted to keep the whole operation private but, given the size with which movie companies were raising money on Wall Street, he reluctantly let the company into the publicly incorporated DEG. He still owns 70 per cent of the stock.

DEG is an umbrella for all De Laurentiis' activities: his productions, the studio in North Carolina, the 47 per cent holding in his Australian offshoot, De Laurentiis Entertainment Limited. But its chief aim is to give De Laurentiis a stronghold in the movie distribution business. It is no secret that the Hollywood producer the took out US citizenship last September was irked by the way the major studios were distributing his films. MGMUA's handling of *The Year of the Dragon*, directed by Michael Cimino, was apparently the last straw.

According to the President of DEG, Francis Schweitzer, they were lousy into the distribution business. "By integrating you can earn more money," he said. "Auxiliary rights are now the primary source of revenue for films." Schweitzer indicated the major studios were offering very unattractive but all-inclusive deals on the De Laurentiis films.

Once into the wider movie business arena De Laurentiis has been very successful in raising cash. In 1987, DEG plans to make 16 major productions all budgeted in the \$US20 to \$40 million range. Their total outlay will be \$US150 million.

DEG is only pulling up \$US23 million of its own money. Another \$US70 million is due to come from a line of credit with the Bank of America. A further \$US50 to \$75 million in what DEG's corporate division president Stephen Greenwald, refers to as "off-balance-sheet financing" is being raised through a limited partnership.

What's the game getting at as a result of DEG's cash grab? A lot of middle brow, commercially-oriented American movies whose titles include *Car*, *Dave 2*, *From the Hip*, directed by Bob Clark (Polk); the thriller *Bedroom Window*; *Dark With An Angel*; and *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*. Others like *China Man* are to be directed by George Compton of *Rampage* fame and *Rampage* which is described in DEG's limited partnership offering that "the courtroom drama concerns the issue of justice-seeker vs vigilante when a frustrated prosecutor is forced to go beyond the boundaries of law after a total killer's misdeeds plus."

DEG's budgets and their private position in fiercely competitive Hollywood make it unlikely that the mini-studio will produce many of the big-budget, big name, star-studded films the American industry is famous for. Quirky, non-formula pictures have a hard time landing at DEG. One former associate told me that whenever he heard of a great script doing the rounds, it

was always frustrating to be told by an agent that DEG was with on the lot to receive the property.

Within DEG, however, there is one small idiosyncrasy: while De Laurentiis has given full artistic control to David Lynch for his next project, a comedy titled *Home Sweet Home*, Lynch also has another comedy script in development. One Salvo Bubble, Lynch is grateful to De

Laurentiis for giving him such a free reign, something unusual for makers of non-formula films which aren't star vehicles.

Giving me artistic control is the best thing Dino is doing for me, Lynch said. "And so long as that's happening, I'm one happy cowboy."

Lynch was responsible for one of DEG's few successes in 1986: *Blue Velvet* cost \$US7 million to make and so far has

The Australian Connection

In 1977, in an interview with *Film Comment*, De Laurentiis was adamant that he be recognised as a "one-man operation": "I believe like when in 1958 the American industry was great in the world, when men like Darryl Zanuck, Zukor, Solodsky, Louis B. Mayer, etc, make really the American industry, was one-man operation. And I still believe today the only way to go — one-man operation. Now: if I am studio, or if I am producer, I leave for you to decide. But my answer is: I am one-man operation."

Now, while his response may well be the same, the structure of his company, the De Laurentiis Entertainment Group Inc., suggests otherwise. With the formation of an Australian production base, active interest is coming from all sides.

The January rush on the Australian company, De Laurentiis Entertainment Ltd (of which DEG will own 49.9 per cent) was a clear indication of at least financial support. Fifty-five million ordinary shares were floated to the public at 90 cents each and the offer was oversubscribed, easily raising the \$27.5 million total. The float is being jointly underwritten by BT Securities Ltd, Potts, West and Trumbull and Paul Morgan and Co.

A further 10 per cent of DEL is owned by Chase Corporation (Australia), 8 per cent by an associate of Chase, Janney Holdings Ltd and 3.1 per cent by Cinesat, a company associated with DEL's new managing director Terry Jackson. (Jackson is former chief executive of Hepple and one of the mainstays behind the marketing of *Crocodyl Dundee*.) Construction of DEL's film studio is expected to



director of DEL King Kong, who cost \$11 million (see a Q&A below)



geared for the American market.

That Australian venture is important but not critical to the American operations of DEL. The company already has a low cost production base in its studio in North Carolina. The latter is a nightside work state so DEL is able to avoid some of the high labour costs of shooting in Los Angeles.

DEL will automatically retain all US distribution rights to any films made in Australia by DEL or in partnership with DEL.

"We want to duplicate in Australia what we're doing here," says Schneider. "If it is an actual early advantage to us here but that's not the prime reason we're down there. Data looks to Australia as the future home of much new talent."

"We see our operation down there strengthening our distribution operations in Australia and New Zealand," says DEL's corporate head, Greenwald.

Whilst playing down the notion that their Australian operation could be a source of cheap movies to plug into their distribution network both in America and overseas DEL is not planning to be wholly dependent on the Australian market to make their money back on their DEL films. "Why try to be successful in a market where other people have tried and failed?" demands Schneider. DEL is after covering a portion of their costs in the Australian market with the rest coming from their international distribution network.

Linking up with DEL will provide an Australian producer an instant overseas distribution guarantee something that may prove successful in future ventures. "If it's a DEL product we'll guarantee distribution," says Schneider. "If it's an outside producer working with DEL, we'll do the same," added of course. It is this long the property involved.

Back in the US DEL's future despite apical predictions from company insiders looks modest. The company has yet to demonstrate there are viable audiences for its middle-level mix of action, adventure and comedy. Although it is currently well financed it will have a hard time going back to Wall Street for more cash if its 1987 slate produces few winners. Thus in 1988 when the cheaper in US dollar terms productions from DEL in Australia come on line the company may have even greater plans for its Australian offshoot.

returned \$US2.5 million in rentals to the company. DEL is hoping that Oscar nominations and foreign returns will push it over the hill into profitability.

DEL has also had some success with Bruce Beresford's *Crimes of the Heart*. By mid January it had grossed \$US14 million at the American box office. DEL's return from the film however will be lessened by the large percentages of the

grosses going to the movie's three stars: Jessica Lange, Diane Keaton and Sherry Stringfield. Each received only \$500,000 upfront for playing in the film.

More notable and more unfortunate for DEL were two of last year's bigger busts. *Top Gun* starring Bryan Brown and King Kong Lives. The latter quickly returned King Kong Dem's by industry analysts cost \$US18

million and took in only \$US2.5 million. The former, made on location in China from the James Clavell novel, cost \$US25 million. It has yet to return \$US2 million to DEL.

When questioned about the impact such megaflops would have on DEL's company president, Fred Schneider, pointed out quickly that "both were conceived under Dino's preceding operations when we were only a production company. He insisted that DEL was obliged to distribute the two films because we would have confused our image with distributors and the public if we didn't release them. But the never entry DEL according to Schneider, "had no production cost not involved in either film. They are part of our past."

Nevertheless, such box office disasters have Wall Street analysts worried especially as many of the latter have already been burnt with their predictions of a very future for DEL's company petter Cannon. The latter under investigation by federal authorities in the US, has had to markedly scale back their production plans. DEL executives battle when they are put in the same categorization like basket at Cannon. They are a fairly highly leveraged company," says Stephen Greenwald. "DEL has low debt-equity ratio, and we're in a different market segment to Cannon."

Cannon, according to Schneider, turns out 35 to 40 low budget films. That seems not initially geared to the US market. We're making higher cost films

begin in March 1987 and be fully operational by November. The \$10 million studio will be built on a 100 acre site at Gade's County, near Barlura Paradise in Queensland. The project appears to have the unwavering support of the Queensland Government who, through the Queensland Government Development Authority, have put up \$7.5 million. The government will lease the property to DEL at the nominal rate of \$1 a year for four years with an option to buy after eight years.

For Australian producers, the most attractive aspect of DEL's position concerns distribution. The parent company DEL will guarantee distribution of all DEL films outside Australia and New Zealand which, in the model days of the pre-state, reduces the risks of production. Under the agreement, DEL offsets the 'negative costs' (direct expenses less distribution and promotional costs) of each production with full payment for each film. DEL will, in turn, acquire the rights to distribute DEL product in Australia and New Zealand. This includes 244 films from the DEL film library.

DEL's long-term plan is to release 22 features in 1987, 25 in the year to December 1988, and 30 the following year. Whilst most of the product will be films produced by DEL or films for which the parent company has acquired rights, a portion will be produced in Australia. At this stage, the company expects to produce five films by the end of next year with an average budget of \$2-10 million. One of DEL's first features is *End of the Line* to be produced by Sue Milliken and directed by Bruce Beresford. Beresford is also a member of the board at DEL. Other directors are Adrian Dail of *Chase Corporation*, Peter Joseph, a merchant banker, Richard Tiele, a partner of the law firm Clayton Utz and Stephen Greenwald, a director at DEL. The chairman of DEL is Oliver De Laurentiis.

TAKING LEAVE OF THE FRENCH ...

Why don't Australians see French films? MICHAEL FREEDMAN, self-confessed Francophile, looks at the fate of French cinema in this country.

FOR AUSTRALIA'S Francophile population (Pécho follows notwithstanding) who continue to turn up in their annual lot of French film culture, Film Nouveau can be both a challenging and sobering experience. Last year's event, the third since its inception in 1984, proved once again that for all their grandiose mode, the French continue to produce some of the worst films in the world. Happily there was also some pretty convincing evidence that they also produce the best.

Whether Australian audiences will get to see these films is another matter. So far there have been no definite sales, although festival director Daniel Chamblon says that negotiations are taking place over three films. For us French film junkies, 1987 looked like being a dry year: there is Jean-Jacques Beineix's *Billy Blue* and Australian distributors have picked up Alain Corneau's *Malice* and Eric Rohmer's *Le Signe du Croisé*. But at the 200 or so films made in France each year, we are lucky to get half a dozen, and none other than not they are the most controversial, most "American" in style.

Unlike most international festivals, Film Nouveau is a non-competitive event, but like

many others its purpose is to sell. For Chamblon it is the festival's raison d'être and the lack of interest being shown in the past 5 films is a bitter pill to swallow after the success of the 1985 event. Of the 13 films shown in 1985, seven were subsequently purchased by local distributors but only four have so far got a theatrical release. Even if they weren't the best on offer, they would have been a promising start on which to build in the future. But exactly it was that high level of sales which has led at least in part to the singular lack of interest shown so far this year.

Talk to the distributors and the reasons soon become clear. The only two films to have been given a national release, *L'Amour en France* and *Monsieur Arlet & Cie* (both sound commercial prospects) were both picked up by Hoyts who can only consider subsidised exhibition through their own cinema. Those bought by independent distributors are still on the shelf waiting for screen time on the overbooked art house circuit a year later. The distributors are loath to purchase any more films until the backlog has cleared. According to Chamblon, "it is the theatre owners who control the cinema in Australia and distribution is increasingly becoming a monopoly of the majors."

Greater Union, although encouraged by the subtitle of *Les Ripoux*, didn't pick up any of the films from the 1985 festival. Their purchase of *Passe de Saïk* (Stunning David) in June 1986 led to herald a new, softer approach to foreign films, but its price, which many consider too high, is obviously working them back to their ground. Terence McMahon, who had many of the films from Film Nouveau says they have plans for only one French purchase this year (not from Film Nouveau), but he is reluctant to divulge the title while negotiations are continuing. With large audiences and a commercial obligation to fill them, McMahon is looking for European films which can attract both the "mass" audience and the art-house crowd, a middle-of-the-road tendency which largely defines and characterises Australia's taste for French cinema.

In Sydney the two most reliable independent outlets for the more interesting foreign language films are the Academy Twin and the Dendy, but both are already heavily committed for this year. Fred



ON THE LEFT: GUY DOLU; IN THE MIDDLE: FRED MICHAEL; ON THE RIGHT: MICHAEL GERMER

O'Brien at the Dendy says he won't be considering any of the films from last year's Film Nouveau until well into this year, at all, but by then it will probably be too late. With *My Beautiful Laundrette*, released in December and still playing in the cinema, programme schedules have been put back while the foreign language film, and the distributors, continue to wait.

Mike Walsh, in charge of programming at Sydney's Academy Twin and Melbourne's Brighton Bay, says both cinemas are already committed well into the second half of this year. His schedules include the French film *Daish* in a French Garden and *Baby Blue*. He would dearly like to be able to show less commercial but more interesting European films, but without another smaller screen it would be commercial suicide.

Anges et Démon of René Féréz who has imported a number of interesting French films in the past, says Féréz probably won't buy any more this year. Falling attendances for foreign language art films and the crisis in screen availability for any specialised films is again the reason. According to Pike the problem for independent distributors has never been worse and it is even having trouble placing Féréz's own Australian productions on the art-house circuit let alone any of the major foreign products.

Of concern to exhibitors also is the apparently futile nature of the art-house circuit. Unable to afford the luxury of expensive advertising and promotions, independent distributors must rely very heavily on word of mouth and favourable reviews for their films. One bad review in the daily press can kill a film's

chances at the box office.

Floyd, Féréz and the Dendy, among others, have plans to open more art house cinemas in Melbourne and Sydney, as perhaps some relief is in sight.

The other outlet is of course SBS television but it also may be a double-edged sword. For Chamblon it is the best thing that is happened to cinema culture in Australia in the last 10 years. Before SBS Australian audiences starved for European cinema had the choice of either the Sydney or Melbourne Film Festivals, or they would pounce on the occasional release at art-house cinema. Now there is a constant flow of good quality European cinema on SBS — for free — and according to Mike Walsh the fall in cinema attendance is very noticeable.

While the small screen may not satisfy cinema junkies, it is doing much of the occasional flinging audiences away from the art houses who so desperately need them. So when it comes to the more challenging films, Chamblon has almost completely abandoned the theatres and says his hope for propagating worthwhile French film culture now lies with television. Ironically, this hand that feeds him may also have a lot of its own. While SBS shows a good selection of European films, most are at least three or four years old before they get screened. SBS's film buying policy is to spend \$5,000, less it or leave it after 101 each film which European producers are understandably reluctant to accept until all revenues for a movie (including theatrical release in Australia) are exhausted. Otherwise SBS will make a profitable but accept an embargo for one year or more.

to do not to deter audiences from a potential cinema release.

According to \$88 Mri buyer Mirella Mancoules the \$5,000 offer does not usually limit their choice, but having made their offer for Claude Chabrol's *Poulet Au Maigre* after the 1985 Film Nouveau they are still waiting for an answer from the French producers MRC. When they tried to buy *Green*, the producers badly refused. The other limitation facing \$88 is their obligation to a culturally diverse viewing audience. We tried to steer away from films which require too much concentration, says Mancoules. This must always be considered with a television audience. She liked three of the films from Film Nouveau last year but because of a 16 percent budget cut for film buying she won't be making any offers until after July.

Back in Paris the news from Australia, who only until this compared to other markets, will only add to the dilemma of the Film Nouveau sponsor Unifrance. A government backed co-operative of distributors, producers and exporters, Unifrance operates festivals in eleven countries four outside Europe. According to a recent article in *Cahiers du Cinema*, France's foreign sales still second only to the United States, have all but stagnated in recent years. And with more exports being bid up by American majors, prospects for a revival are looking decidedly grim. *Cahiers* also note that France remains the only country in the world where the local product still outperforms American films. But then

France has an enviable system of government support and incentives for exhibitors prepared to show a percentage of art films in their programs.

Another increasingly nipping item in the side of the French film export industry are their hands from across the channel. With an apparent revival in British cinema — mainly directed to entice audiences — the French have one more competitor to contend with. In Sydney in January we saw the unprecedented phenomenon of four British films, *Only Beautiful*, *Leonardo*, *Mona Lisa*, *A Zed And Two Nothings* and *The Adam Garden* playing concurrently in both the City and the Academy Twin — and all attracting large audiences. The cinemas owners were welcoming to the commercial delights of the English language. You could visit a cinema for a *Lynchfest*, says Fred O'Brien, and the film is doing three times the business of any foreign language film we've shown.

Of the six French films voted in the world's top ten for 1985 by *Cahiers du Cinema*, only one (*Godard's Hot Mary*) has been released in Australia and if not for Film Nouveau no others would even have been seen. For Australian producers pushing for sales in France and other European countries, the trade embargo must be hard to justify.

While the overwhelming majority of cinema screens in Australia at any given time continue showing American



POLICE: Gerald Depardieu, Sophie Marceau

films, and with generations of Australian audiences mentored in American culture, change will be hard to bring about. Australian exhibitors agree that it is a language problem which puts all non-English films as an enormous disadvantage, but it is at the level of cinematic language that the problems are most worth exploring.

The scarcity of good audiences which has disadvantaged world cinema since the 1940s and led Hollywood to harder seems to have closed opposing responses from either side of the Atlantic. For the American (and also most of the Australian) industry the answer has largely been found in pioneering technology and special effects, while for the French it has been an unwilling commitment to cinematic form and style. One can be viewed in terms of improvement, the other can only be appreciated as an evolution and given our sporadic exposure to French cinema, I tend to rue that bit.

For me, one of the most exquisite films of last year's Film Nouveau was Andre Téchiné's *Le Jeu du Corne* which seemed to make the screen vibrant with the language of cinema. Whether one considers the dazzling moments of its mass on screen (hard to appreciate while roasting subtitles) or the superb symmetry of its construction, the 1986 pleasure consisted in seeing the work of a filmmaker who, having returned to film for almost 20 years to a certain conception of cinema, has brought it to a level of stirring perfection. In this tale of broken promises and unrequited love, Téchiné has found the perfect chemistry between subject, narrative

treatment and mise en scene that it was a pleasure that will be denied to Australian audiences who had only glimpsed Téchiné's work in one film. The *Secrets Satisfes* brought seven years after it was made for a run at the Longford and the AFI's Chauvel in Sydney.

Jacques Cousteau's *La Pénitence* loomed large in one's mind long after the festival ended, if for nothing other than its offer of proof that a filmmaker needs no more than a single cinema and location (in this case an empty theatre) and some superb performances to make an intoxicating film. *Docteur* is one of an astonishing number of French filmmakers (Rohmer and Douché are others) for whom low budgets are more than a simple economic reality but have become an aesthetic principle.

It would of course be remiss not to point out some of the failures of the festival and two seem worth mentioning. *Flagrant Délit* (Claude Fassiné) should serve as a suitable warning to Australian filmmakers embarking on co-productions with the French, an American cop unravels a murder in the south of France where even the made spoken perfect English and where any semblance of cultural difference was purely coincidental. And *Petit de Fie* (Joël Périhé) is a baroque orgy of violence and bloodletting, sent many of the Sydney audience scurrying out to the Hollywood side next door for a well earned crosscut.

Film Nouveau, Chambon promises, will be back next year but until then it seems we'll all hold our breath.

Michael Freedman



FLAGRANT DELIT: Laureen Hutton, Anne Roussel

MAKING SENSE OF JAPAN

What's the best way of presenting films from another culture to a local audience? FREDA FREIBERG and SUSAN STEWART compare recent seasons of Japanese cinema here and overseas.

IN PARIS (in winter (our summer), there were two retrospective seasons of Japanese films screening simultaneously — apart from one-off screenings of individual Japanese films at the Cinéma de l'Europe).

At the Pompidou Centre, in conjunction with a monumental retrospective exhibition of art works from the various avant-garde movements in Japan ('Japan des Avant-gardes 1910-1980' — an exhibition of more than 500 works and documents, embracing architecture, design, graphic, posters, photography, paintings and sculpture, as well as video and film clips), they have been concurrently running four Japanese film seasons. The biggest of these was 'Cinema and Literature in Japan — from the Meiji era to today' — a season of no less than 90 films adapted from literary works by modern Japanese novelists covering the internationally noted masters' Iwano Mikami, Tanizaki and Kawabata, as well as women writers not well known in the West, like

Anyashiki and Hayashi, and many others.

On the same day, you could see both Kurosawa and Imamura's adaptation of *The Wind of Naranya* (1958 and 1980, respectively) on another day, three Kenzan adaptations of novels by Hayashi Fumio, on another day, three adaptations of *Yasuko* novels by three different prose writers (Shimada, Ito and Mizoguchi), and, on two consecutive days, six adaptations of six different Kawabata novels by six different directors — Shimizu, Naruse, Ozu, Kurosawa, Shinoda, and Toyoda. Consequently, there was a season of 15 films for young people, a season of five Imamura documentaries, and a season of 50 short experimental and avant-garde films put together by the Director of Image Forum in Tokyo.

We have described the programme available to Parisian residents and long-term sojourners — the seasons ran from 17 December until 5 March — to give an idea of how much Japanese cinema is on view overseas — and to indicate how little of Japanese cinema we get to see here. We know that Paris is a bigger city than Sydney or Melbourne, and that Paris — like London and New York — may rely on a huge tourist population to swell the ranks of audiences for specialised interest programmes; nevertheless, we could not but envy the Parisians for the quantity and range of Japanese films they can get to see, in comparison with what we are offered here.

The APF's recent season of *New Cinema Japan* is a case in point. We were offered 11 features in Melbourne and 10 in Sydney. Of those screened in Melbourne, four had been screened at recent Melbourne Film Festivals (Yokubo Club in 1986, *A Boy Called Three* in 1986, *A Glassy Sky* in 1987, *Autumn River* in 1983), two of them (the last named) later receiving post-festival releases at art house cinemas. Of those screened in Sydney, *Family Game*, *Group Portrait* and *Paradise View* had been screened in recent Sydney Film Festivals — in 1984, 1985 and 1986 respectively. More to the point, the percentage was a disparate group of films with little in common apart from the fact that they had all been produced in the last decade.



THE TRYPOON CLUB: new season series

In Sydney, audiences were seduced by the visit of the lively young Japanese director, Ishu Sogo, who exhibited his early work and discovered it with audiences. The Sydney season (one of the APF's most successful import packages) coincided with a range of events organised for Japan Week. No such activities took place in conjunction with the Melbourne season.

(For the APF, budget is obviously a factor. The season here was supported by the Japan Foundation, which picked up the costs of the films, their freight, and the expenses of the festival guest. A fine photo-copied leaflet of material on the films was handed out at sessions; the money to produce a booklet was not available.)

At the Pompidou Centre, the novels from which the programmed films had been adapted were on sale in the lobby bookshop, and an exhibition on the authors of the novels — with photographs, manuscripts, biographical information — was mounted in an adjoining space. The organisers also produced an art-quality catalogue — with high gloss stills — written by French and Japanese experts on Japanese cinema. There were essays on the relations between literature and cinema in Japan, on theatre and cinema in Japan, and on popular literature and its heroes. There were also discursive notes on 37 different writers, with lists of works available in French translation and titles of works which have been adapted to the screen with dates and directors' names appended. Any reader of *Screenwriter*

will be aware that the publishing trade here is intimately linked with film distribution. Local publishers usually manage to re-release in paperback the books on which new American, British and Australian features (and television mini-series) are based. And time their interest to co-incide with the cinema releases. It is time that the publishing trade were co-opted in the work of promoting Japanese film, through timing paperback releases of translated works of fiction to coincide with the release of the filmed adaptation of the novel.

It is not only novels, but theoretical and critical writings which are important in the creation of excitement for specific films and groups of films. It would be helpful to promote sales of these publications around Japanese film seasons by, at the very least, providing subscribers

THE NEW MORNING OF BILLY THE BOY



with a bibliography of useful source material.

However, the critical canon of English-language writings on Japanese cinema is not sufficiently up-to-date in its emphases and range to equip the audience for this particular AFI season. A series of articles — on, for example, popular culture in Japan today, stars of the Japanese entertainment world, the Japanese film industry's endeavors to reintegrate an aging industry, new young directors at work in Japan today — published in the form of an accompanying booklet or monograph, ideally in the form of a special issue, published prior to the season in newspapers or magazines, could have justified the season and provided the audience with a more useful context for viewing efforts like *White*. While we are aware that time and money are required to prepare and produce such monographs and features, we feel they are necessary in the case of a culture largely unfamiliar to local audiences.

In the end, the time and expense spent on preparing and distributing such articles and publications would prove worthwhile, not only in terms of increased understanding of the Japanese cinema, but also in terms of increased interest in it — an interest which will in turn generate an audience in the historical returns for distributors and exhibitors of Japanese films. For, until we do more educational work around Japanese film, the old adage alone will continue. As long as it is perceived as strange and difficult, people will continue to stay away in droves; and as

long as there are no accessible audiences for Japanese films in Australia, no distributor (subsidized or otherwise) will be encouraged to import large and expensive seasons of Japanese films.

In view of the random sample method which appears to have been the criterion used for the selection of films in this latest AFI season, it is not easy to identify common themes, moods or directions within them. There were some recurring themes — deflected Japanese youth, rampant consumerism, the moral and spiritual vacuum afflicting modern Japan (and, in other words, the darker side of the Economic Miracle — evident in *The Family Game*, *The Man Who Stole The Sun*, *Typhoon Club*, *A Day Called David* etc.). However, alongside them, we were treated to romantic idylls such as *Miss Lonely* and *A Dancer From Spring*, which were strongly marked by the sort of excessive sentimentality which Donald Richie noted as a characteristic of popular Japanese cinema of the past. We may well question their inclusion in a package entitled *New Cinema Japan*. And yet, one could find a common thread linking two such disparate films as *A Dancer From Spring* and *The New Morning Of Billy The Kid* in that quite different homage to the former re-created in its attempt to recreate events in rural Hokkaido, the latter anachronously alludes to the iconography of the western, along with numerous other cinematic references. This latter film, one of the most



THE MAN WHO STOLE THE SUN, comedy-parade in performance style

interesting in the season constitutes a panoramic set of parody on world cinema, popular culture and high culture. Its list of characters include a hero called Billy the Kid, a female title named Charlotte Rampling, a dishwasher named Miki Enagata, an artist named Sergeant (and) Sanders, a gang boss named Harry Callahan, other villains named Black Springsteen and Leonid Beachley. In addition to a samurai, junior called Musashi (a legendary Japanese samurai hero, whose exploits have been the subject of numerous Japanese films) and a waitress who recites poetry (played by a young Japanese poet familiar to Japanese audiences), Billy the Kid arranges for — and finally returns to — a painted backdrop of Monument Valley, and the action (which culminates in a shoot-out, killing off most of the characters) takes place in a bar called 'Slaughterhouse'.

A comparable historic energy was evident in *The Man Who Stole The Sun*, but there the black comedy is more focused, less anarchic, because it is used as a weapon in the fight against nuclear power installations. Its narrative, too, is more conventionally suspenseful, despite the strikingly effective use of comic-strip heroics in performance style and editing. Here again, as in *Billy The Kid*, the focus on the hybridisation of culture in Japan lays to rest all the old assumptions about the uniqueness and difference and otherness of Japanese culture.

In the programming of two features by Morita, Sonata and

Yamashita in Sydney (Morita and Sonata only in Melbourne) an explicit desire to create new Japanese culture could be detected. This move was not altogether successful for both Morita and Sonata's more recent films were noticeably less adventurous, less marked by an idiosyncratic style, than their earlier highly acclaimed films, *The Family Game* and *Typhoon Club*, respectively. In Melbourne, *The Family Game* was virtually given its commercial release in conjunction with the AFI season, screening daily throughout the fortnight, with most of the publicity directed towards it, at the expense of other films.

Overall, the attendances in Melbourne were disappointing, pointing to the need for more careful packaging, programming, promotion and timing of Japanese film seasons in the future. Clearly, it is not good business sense to launch a season of new and challenging foreign films in late November or December — the so-called Silly Season. On the other hand, it would be incorrect to deduce, from the attendance figures, that there is a lack of interest in Japanese cinema. Recent *Deluge* and *Intemperance* seasons have attracted full houses and an enthusiastic audience response. We look forward to the next season confident that past successes can be repeated, if not exceeded, and that we will not need to make an annual pilgrimage to Paris in order to experience the variety and vitality of Japanese cinema.

a procession out of prison



It's been described as "Norman Rockwell meets Hieronymus Bosch"; writer and director

DAVID LYNCH

talks to DAVID MARSH and ANDREAS MISSLER about his most recent and most disturbing work, *Blue Velvet*.



THREE'S A CROWD: Laura Dern, Joseph C. Phillips, and Kyle MacLachlan in *Blue Velvet*



TWO'S COMPANY: Fanny Fanny and Anthony Higgins in *Elephant Man*



ONE'S A COMMUNAL NIGHTMARE: Jack Nance in *Elephant Man*

"I requested to meet a prototype, for, little German with fat cheeks running down his chin," and Mel Brooks of David Lynch. "I wanted to turn out to be a clean-cut, American WASP kid, like Jimmy Stewart 15 years ago." While shooting *Dune* in 1983, King described Lynch as a "madman in sheep's clothing."

How a nice guy here in the American Northwest and raised as a Virginian can open the centers of the human psyche to produce *Eraserhead* and now *Blue Velvet* is going to remain an unsolved mystery. David Lynch wants it that way, but the point is that it's fun to probe around a little, which is like the promise of his latest film.

If you were home from college to look after the movie because your father had had a stroke, and then you found a cut-off human ear in a field, you'd probably be curious. So is Jeffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan), the hero of *Blue Velvet*. He learns from Sandy (Laura Dern), the local policeman's daughter, that the ear has something to do with nightclub singer Dorothy Vallon (Isabella Rossellini) and he connects her with a redneck headcase called Frank Booth (Dennis Hopper), who gets his kicks with an oxygen mask and a piece of blue velvet. Jeffrey's curiosity takes him on a nightmare trip to the other side of the tracks.

"Why" it's a good question to ask in the total over coffee.

"I love mysteries, like Jeffrey," says David Lynch. "I'm like Henry (in *Eraserhead*) and Jeffrey because I get confused about things that I see and I worry about a lot of things and I'm curious."

So is Jeffrey really David Lynch?

"Well, he looked himself on me." (Some critics have noted a physical resemblance between Lynch and MacLachlan, even down to details of dress.)

Did you choose him as an alter ego?

"Well, no. People say that... but I suppose I did. But he doesn't borrow his shirt like that all the time. There's something to it. Kyle looked like that up because he saw Jeffrey in me and he just took on certain things."

This trademark of Lynch's is not just a sign of reticence. It serves as many questions as it deflects.

David Lynch has always dreamed that way and for half of his 40 years he has been making films. His youth, however, was spent behind an easel and not at the hazy studio business performance. It was an attempt at submission at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts that brought him to film. With his first four-minute short *The Alphabet* and a new script, Lynch applied to the American Film Institute for a grant to do a second film, without hope of success, he thought. He was offered a \$1,000 grant. According to AFI director, George Stevens Jr., the submitted film had all been cut-up and sewed into various plots and Lynch's *The Alphabet* was left all on its own. They decided he deserved a grant on the spot.

The Grandmother, subsequently made with the help of the AFI, introduced the familiar Lynch style. The film has no dialogue, only images and sound effects, and it is the story of a lonely boy who writes his bed in no unimpaired attempt to gain attention from his parents. He finds a seed which he plants, and from it grows a huge rose which later gives birth to the *Grandmother*. An afterthought figure, the girl the boy the love he needs but she dies, leaving him alone once more.

In 1978, Lynch set off with his family for California to attend the AFI's Centre for Advanced Film Studies. In the studios of the Centre's Beverly Hills mansion

Lynch began work on the five-year dog that produced *Eraserhead*. The money ran out, the production stopped, started again, and Lynch delivered the *Wall Street Journal* to pay the rent. The story of Henry Spencer, with his distorted haircut and sick IT prototype baby, was shown for the first time at the 1978 Los Angeles Filmex. When the lights went up there was dead silence. Jack Nance, who played Henry, was reportedly delighted at the stunned reaction. "I told you it would turn them into members," he said to Lynch. There was a long pause to digest this communal nightmare before the ovation came.

His parents, according to the American *Geographical* magazine, were very upset when they saw *The Grandmother*. They didn't know where it came from. Family life for the Lynches "was like this, red flowers, white pocket squares and green grass with birds chirping in the trees", all of which appear in the opening sequence of *Blue Velvet*.

"I think what happened was that I went to the big city and it scared me, it was real frightening," confided Lynch to *Geographical*. *Eraserhead*, he said at another time, was his revenge on Philadelphia.

So what was the origin of *Blue Velvet*?

"Well, there wasn't one point. It was just gaudy fragments of interesting things. Some fell away, others stayed and began to join up. It's always kind of magical in how these ideas string themselves together. It's not something I try to manipulate. It comes in from somewhere else, like I was a radio, but I'm a head radio. Sometimes the parts don't hook together. Like with *Eraserhead*, my next project, I'm just writing to get answers to problems, I don't know where that's going to happen."



DAVID LYNCH: "Maurice is sleepin' it sloppin'."

(*Annex Footst is almost a guy who is three feet tall, bald and who wears a red wig. It also concerns electricity. This is the standard synopsis given to the world's press for a couple of years now. Only Diane De Laurentis knows more.*)

You spent a long time for a script there?

"Yeah, sometimes I like listening to music or reading novels, or... rather, I like technical manuals or something like that. Scientific things or metaphysical things to trigger ideas. It took a long time for *Blue Velvet*. I needed some new ideas and finally when they came, it was so obvious, but they weren't there for a while."

You could describe your way of writing as intuitive. Did you have the music in mind at that stage? (For example, Bobby

Vitona's song *Blue Velvet*.)

"I wrote the script to *Shogakukan*, the last symphony. No. 13 I think, and I just kept playing a certain part of it over and over again. Sometimes just going out into the street and seeing a building or something makes all the difference. You have to expose yourself to different things."

In *Blue Velvet* there are a lot of shots that go down beneath the surface, into the grass, into a rat, and so on.

"There's a lot of inter-activity on the surface of life but the heavy stuff, the really great stuff, to me, happens in invisible area."

Direct questions about the film seem to evoke more poetic answers. How about that character in the apartment at the end? Is he dead?

"Well, the kids called five different people called the producer that evening and said 'There's no problem, but what is that guy doing? Is he supposed to be dead? We see him moving.' And the producer came to me on the set and said, 'David, this must be a good thing. The kids never talk otherwise. They don't care about anything.'"

Producers are another important factor in David Lynch's career. One walked out leaving when he was shown a scene from *Eraserhead* during production. They ignored David Lynch for four years after that film's release. Even Mel Brooks thought he must be a fringe case before engaging him to direct *The Elephant Man* in 1980. On the success he achieved here, Diane De Laurentis had to direct the

mid-60s *Dune*, based on the Frank Herbert novel. It flopped, but Dune kept his faith in David Lynch. The price of artistic integrity was a reduced salary on a low budget production. *She* first began shooting somewhere on the backwoods of North Carolina, near the site of fictional town of Lumberton, "the town where people really know how much wood a woodchuck chucks..."

Was there any interference from the producers, or did *Blue Velvet* get out at all?

"No. I mean there was an 80-minute cut of perfect stuff that got taken out. But there was one scene, before Ben's place in a bar where a girl put her breasts on fire, her nipples. That was a good scene."

Are there two parallel, co-existing worlds in *Blue Velvet*?

"I see it all as one world. That's the weird part of it. There's the surface and things you discover below. It's not a happy ending in *Blue Velvet*. It's the same images as at the start but you know so much more about them. It's like if two people walk into a room. One of them, you know, has just had his family murdered and the other has just won a prize or something. If you didn't know that, they'd just look like normal people or something. There's light and varying degrees of darkness."

Why do some people laugh at the scenes with Sandy and Jeffrey? Particularly at Sandy's dream?

"That scene is kind of embarrassing. Sandy is this emotional kind of girl who gets into this euphoric state which is beautiful. But it's embarrassing if you watch it as a group. If you're on your own it's a different experience. It's a strange phenomenon. It's a feeling of what can happen when two people are sitting in a car and falling in love when they're all alone and no-one else is watching. They say things like this in a safe environment, goofy things. And I think films should be embarrassing in some places. I also like the contrast of Sandy living in the same world as Frank and Ben where they're all very naturally expressing their feelings."

Would you give Sandy and Jeffrey a future?

"Yeah, absolutely, but in a way... as another sort of future. It wouldn't be euphoric..."

VIOLENCE ON THE SCREEN

Some of my areas of interest in film are horror and exploitation. I've argued on many occasions that there are multiple differences at work in those often maligned genres, only to be thwarted by the widely-held assumption that all horror films are the same. They are not. In these debates it has been said to me (sometimes as a putdown), that I am interested only in "genre studies", whereas the most responsible and more immediate concern is the censorship debate lies in "empirical sciences".

Or, to put it more bluntly, I would be keen on explaining how the producers re-edited *Wes Craven's The Hills Have Eyes — Part II*, while those with a better sense of social responsibility would be gathering "lobby-arms" to relate the rise of street-violence to the increased popularity of psycho movies. The very concept of "empiricism" and all its suspect connotations are evident even here, in that "true" social responsibility is assumed to be that which most obviously declares itself as such. *Enterprise* is the house of facts, of constructing a "factuality", of appearing factual.

But empiricism can be dangerous because it actually attempts to end debate, to eradicate the overlapping space of opposing views by scientifically "proving" that there is only room for one space, one side, one option. Regardless of political orientation, empirical data can be highly flammable fuel in the volatile censorship debate. Networks like *Illness: National Coalition On Television Violence* (since 1980) and *Victoria's own Australian Children's Television Action Committee* (since the mid-seventies) propagate through their newsletters an empiricism that thinly disguises their sometimes hysterical beliefs in the omnipotence of the electronic media and its encroachment on a linear, ordered society. (See the *MEV News* Vol. 4 No. 3 May 1983 for its bibliography on research into TV/film violence and its effects on society: it lists over 600 studies — most of them psychologically oriented — published between 1933 and 1983. Note the rhetoric of the editorial headings: "Violence provokes



Joe Young

harmful worldwide — research evidence 'overwhelmed' according to US")

Throughout the past 30 years, the censorship debate has centred on appropriate signs of the times, the rise of juvenile delinquency in the fifties, the camera reportage of student riots, Vietnam and political assassinations in the sixties; the increasing dissemination of a public addicted to network crime shows in the seventies, and the gross limits reached by the proliferation of hardcore gore movies and videos in the eighties (with sex, drugs and rock'n'roll being constants over those 30 years). Except for the occasional insight into the ideological complexities of these cultural controversies, the arguments dance around repetitive philosophical polarities as if performing some weird ritual. Both sides appear equally ridiculous, from the feasibility of cause-and-effect theories to the shallowness of individual-freedom sentimentalism. Worst of all, the cultural artifacts in the line of fire —



Sightings on film screen 2

be they films, videos, TV shows, cartoons, comics, magazines or rock records — suffer from a critical generalization and reduction. One gets the impression that not only are all horror movies the same, but everything pointed to as the cause of social ill-effects is simply another corpse of the social disease.

The Sickness

The notion of sickness and disease is very interesting. Let's look at the multiple meanings of the word "sick". When used to describe a gory, perverted or pornographic film, it refers to the "sick mind" who produced such a work. Not surprisingly, many such films are looked on as the denigrated and uncontrolled markings of dreams, attracting and even sustaining devoted viewers. Priority is granted to empirical sciences over genre studies because, by calling a film "sick", its status as cinema is overruled; forget the damn movies — we've got a disease on our hands!

But "sick" has a more revealing >

Seen any sick films lately? PHILIP BROPHY leaps to the defence of violence, exploitation and zombies who bite their own hands off.

"THIS ISN'T A FILM —

Whether it's *Rambo* or World Championship Wrestling or *I Dismember Mama*, it's an issue where feelings run high. Cinema Papers looks at three areas where violence is a matter for particular controversy: in the horror film, in the representation of women, and as part of the censorship debate.



-IT'S A DISEASE"

For every genuine horror film like *Edmund's*, *Sweeney's* story, it goes into the eye, and in the heart, of a construction worker in a junky old car, a victim who dies before he is even born.

Conversely, what remains of *Edmund's* story would seem to be just a part and parcel of the genre by means of Rick Salovey's *Dark Horrors* and Bill Lasker's *Shocking Horror*, the little poetry magazine of horror. Can it different seeds or sensibilities — does *Edmund's* story about darkness? That exposition holds exponentially more to challenge the reality of our age makes it inevitably ecological? But the society is subsequently exposed in terms that will keep you from other kinds of food for thought in its genre.

Chris Caruso, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2 September 1988, p. 17

meaning when it is used by kids, it means creepy, hairy, obvious, wicked, boring — all the adjectives that go with the drawn-out yawn and eyes rolling to the ceiling. Most of all, it signifies an overt awareness of the mechanisms of an intended effect. In this sense "tacky" is the dumbness of an old punch-line, the clumsy throw-off the skydiver, the galleon of fake blood; the stupidity of the character who goes down into the basement, the cheapness of the speedway's suspension wires, the tackiness of the monster's rubber suit; and even the predictability of the parents who miss the whole point.

This duality of "tackiness" is not just an anthropological observation of a "generation gap"; it exemplifies cinematic sensibilities in conflict. For every person offended by *Mama* there is one left rolling around in laughter. For every person left shuddered by *A Nightmare On Elm Street* there is one appalled by its content. Their difference is coded not by aesthetic or critical appraisal, but by modes of interpreting cinematic style and form. And it is this very duality that is often missed by research and case studies which try to examine the cause-and-effect relationships between the (tacky) movie and the (tacky) viewer.

Obviously, the analyst looks at gory films for different reasons from the genre fan. Each has their own set values, pleasure quotients and emotional gratification by which they mark the films; and just as the fan has no time for playing analysis, the analyst is unlikely to adopt the fan's naive yet transient conceptions. Even if data sheets and surveys quote precise responses from fans, addicts, kids, dead-heads, etc, the effect is only one of continued accuracy that still advantages the incredible multiplicity which the "tack" identity only bears at. A multiplicity of viewing habits, interpretative methods and assessment levels have created the gulf which surrounds the wary tower inhabited by the social analyst.

Returning to the notion of the "tack yard" which makes gory/sex films, a similar multiplicity exists. Inevitably few films are actual demented doodlings to follow the psychological metaphor). Possibly Edward Wood Jr's *Shock Of Girls*, Albert Zugsmith's *Confessions Of An Opium Eater*, Jess Franco's *Succubus*, Don

Edmonds' *She — The Wolf Of The 55 de Jackson/Youskin's The Demon Lover* could be characterized in this way. But even these unworlthy films have a complex yet precise location within the dense and interweaving histories of horror, sex and exploitation in the cinema. A knowledge and appreciation of film culture helps to identify films as cultural products, otherwise one is insensitive to their differences and similarities. Few social analysts appear to have this ability.

Many "tack" films play at being tack by deliberately provoking the wrath of conservatives and those ignorant of the conventions, or by choosing into that great chasm where only isolated sensibilities can illuminate the exact intent of the film. Self-consciousness, irony, short-circuiting, parody, assimilation, simulation and self-dramatization all come into play — particularly in the contemporary horror film. (See my "Tales Of Terror" in *Covering Pages* 49 Dec 1984 and "Horrority" in *Screen Vol 27 No 1 Jan/Feb 1988*). This isn't an elite realm for the film buff, because gore-heads, horror-heads, and sicko freaks (be they kids or adults) covet these textual and ontological complexities in huge gulps. They can, for example, differentiate the cute profiles (*Attack Of The Killer Jezebels*, *Murders From Outer Space*, *Igor & The Lunatics*), from the self-effacing satires (*Motel Hell*, *Mother's Day*, *Good Time Stories*), from the safe comedies (*The Amusement*, *Masters Of The Living Dead*, *Friday The Thirteenth 3-4*), from the fuller lessons of horror and humour (*The Evil Dead*, *Blood Sucking Freaks*, *Alone In The Dark*).

From their advertising campaigns to their production notes to their critical and 'fans' reception to the films, their nature is clearly conveyed. This kind of cinema is well-documented (under the genres of cult/underground/midnight/outlaw/

rocky/sex films) but different problems arise when areas of mainstream cinema like horror, gore and suspense films with a comparatively wider distribution via film and video operate in a subcultural mode.

So-called 'cult films' are made safe by segregation and marginalization, playing in repertory theatres and art houses where they can be the 'other' without posing any real threat. It is interesting to note, also, that very little offense can be found in these cultural spaces because they promote middle-class, progressive values similar to those that have instigated the general opening with the "tack" movies of the mainstream. (See the latest *Vulgarism* calendar, a genre of all variety of pseudo-radical/arty/cult/underground/top films for those who seek something 'better' than mainstream cinema.) As confusing as all this seems, I would argue it up than contemporary film production, distribution and exhibition is often likely to communicate culturally in ways contrary to its recognized social operations. Such operational barriers are very visible in *The Blues Brothers* really a cult film? Is *Dave* really an art film? Is *Revenge The Valley Of The Ultra-Violence* just another tacky porn movie? Is *Cherryblossom's* *Woochick* (to quote the vid Stanton) "tackback"? Isn't Meryl Streep as much a cult star as Michael Berryman? Isn't *Peggy's Horror* an example of the Sweeney Winy *Requiem* Comedy genre? Once again, one needs to look at the actual films in more detail instead of simply acknowledging their purported cultural stance and their advertised cinematic type.

The Films

Social analysts and concerned people could well discount all of the above by claiming that what is missing and needed is information about the viewers themselves — hence the need for their field surveys. These surveys will usually be based on a prior conviction that certain people should not be seeing certain films — hence the need for censorship. It is no surprise that pre-teensagers get to see all these films, but is this really a problem? I was 12 when the R-certificate was introduced and nearly everyone in my class saw *Chickadee Chicago* and *The Execution* at the cinema. Was that bad then? Is it bad now?

A public outcry against violence (*Blackwork Chicago*) and satanism

Sometimes a part of a television or videotape programme is hard to forget, even when you would really like to forget it. Can you describe a part you have seen which was like that, and the name of the programme it came from?

- When the killer goes into the kitchen and gets his face up (Phillydog)
- When the doctor tried to kill the nurse (Rough Day in Los)
- When it looks like the man and the woman are going to have a fight, but the man is the woman and his hand goes right through his body and turns into a hand out of hell (Demolition)
- When the child abuse section about the boy that had a cockroach-infested nappy

— *Journal of a year 8 class in a primary school in south-eastern Melbourne, August 1988.*



Reproduced from *Slaves*

(Excerpt) followed the release of those films, but to say that society was outraged by their contents is simplifying the matter. Both films were cultural clashes. *Clockwork Orange* because a recognized auteur appeared to portray gratuitous violence, and *The Exorcist* because it marked the introduction of big budget splatter to mainstream screens. Due to their cultural circumstances, these films became social transgressions. It didn't take much for kids to recognize the breaking of social taboo when they saw it happen, and today kids get just as much of a kick from seeing all the stuff deemed unsuitable for them, which indicates that the appeal of a film is not measured to a straightforward identification with its contents.

Kubrick and Friedkin are far from exploitation directors, and indeed they are recognized auteurs who benefit from a certain cultural approval. Remembering how clearly the social and cultural values of "fine art" and "variable films" are linked, it is unlikely that the artistic merit of a recognized director would come under fire these days. Instead, the charges are laid more directly against the faceless, nameless mass of titillating subject matter that floods out the bulk of all exploitative pictures — a sprawling plain where individualism is preserved to be unnecessary. However, it is quite possible that anti-exploitation pictures (or films that never pretend to have any artistic merit whatsoever) are more open

about their exploitative nature than big blockbusters which gloss their low-level appeal with high production values and the stamp of a known producer or director. It is also likely that most audiences recognize this difference.

Compare *Rocky IV* with *The World Wrestling Federation* TV coverage: the latter is total artifice and unadorned theatre while the former attempts (in true Stallone style) to make a point. Now there's the real danger! Volko and the Shirk are pure, plastic attacks for the cynic made most of us, moving as to last and year at the bleated spectacle which doesn't send up super-power struggles as much as it simulates them. *Rocky* glorifies, romanticizes, idealizes and dramatizes the same struggles with a realism that suffices its very absurdity. Once again we have a conflict in modes of cinematic form and style, a clash of symbolic codes. *Rocky* manipulates our emotional response (intentionally and in accordance with our desire) while the wrestling movie as to suggest our will/need to be manipulated. This is the stuff of theatre, of mutual engagement, of a willingness to be played with by a film or whatever. It is also the most dangerous area to consider concerning because of its imposition of a power which does not take into account how the individual exercises control in such a cultural exchange.

The Audience

Horror and exploitation, work along similar lines to the wrestling, in that the audience which determines the genre's manipulation are conscious of the signifying nature working in these films. It is integral to their enjoyment of them. This means that they are — no matter what their age — interpreting the film's form and content in ways that are not shown clearly in survey sheets which demand things like audience intake, selection and rationale. To centre on such areas simply fulfils the prescribed needs of the survey indicating that either a legal infringement is occurring (patrons viewing AO material) or that adverse effects are being produced from excessive imitations (youths and/or adults viewing too much AO material). Both conclusions of course are imposed (or full) their own desire, to control the production and distribution of AO material.

There is something undeniably parental about all of this — and I mean that in the most innocuous of ways. One can follow two major plots in the censorship scenario: (i) the parent desperately trying to regain its lost, agonizing control over the child; and (ii) a culture desperately trying to exercise its control over nature.

Reaching the endless 'pro-control of anti-social matter' views of the vox populi, the voice of the parent is often raised. It is a voice (it is said) I wouldn't understand because I don't have children — a form of closed logic that claims only parents are qualified to discuss the matter. But I was once a kid and I remember quite clearly how ludicrous most parental concerns were. As part of an audience then and now (between 15 years of horror, terror, gore and gore) the standard of misrepresentation holds: just as parents pressure their children don't have a voice, the 'pro-control' lobby pressures that the audience for exploitation is equally not qualified to discuss the matter, that its voice is about as irrelevant as that of the film critic and genre studies.

Most 'parental' rhetoric heavily derives from palpable understandings of psychology and sociology. Perhaps the most telling aspect here is the notion of 'being exposed' to rock movies/AO material/unruly material. It is unbelievably demanding to treat a viewer as some dumb lump, who happens to get stuck in a theatre or in front of a TV and suffers a form of 'racial radiation' from the frightening power of some horrific images blasted onto the subject's screen. This logic for reasons concerned primarily in behavioural terms, and when legislation is backed up by behavioural theories that we're really got something to worry about. As such, the call for censorship is often far more dangerous than the dressing-up horrors of an illiterate, uneducated society.

The nature of representation is central to the censorship debate. Consider how 'old style' horror is preferred because it leaves more up to the viewer's imagination whereas modern horror and gore is merely a blunt assault of visceral effects, and how 'sensate' is acceptable because it stimulates dreamer whereas pornography bludgeons our sexual fantasies. This is not double standards

Sometimes a part of a television or cinema programme is so enjoyable that you always seem to remember it. Can you describe a part you have seen which was like that?

- I like the part where a lady got slapped by an ape (My Dad)
- I like it when the groves open and all the stars are there and (my friend)
- I like the bit where the man was pulled upside down on a trap and then his back started to wriggle (The 10th Part 2)
- When the lady started to get hit and started to get hit by the girls (The Girl)
- When a woman threw a stone and it hit off the top half of the other guy's head (Comedy)

Survey of 4 Year 11 class in a primary school in North-west London, August 1988.

(as some have argued) because it is in fact two separate modes of representation — that which seduces through invisible mechanisms, and that which overpowers through visible mechanisms. It is the difference between Hitchcock's montages and Herschel Gordon Lerner's monstrosities; between Monroe's lips and *Heavenly Creatures*' pink bits. It is the difference between symbol and sign; between metaphor and metonymy.

The mechanisms of culture — how it communicates — are often disguised, hidden, manipulative, fused, repressed. Nearly all representations are coded as acceptable so long as their meanings are absent. These exposure scenes all sorts of problems — politically, ideologically, socially, erotically — and as we are continually made to focus on the contents of representations rather than their forms or nature, a sudden confrontation with the latter upsets the balance of things. To be more specific, hardcore horror and porn can constitute a basic social negotiation because they confront one set of values with a conflicting set: not that people are offended by such imagery, but that such imagery gives an indication of what is already operating in softer, symbolic image codes. The desire for censorship in this sense can thus be seen as a refusal to face some of the basic social modes of image production and identification — those concerning sex, horror and violence. The ultimate desire, it appears, is to erase these elements from our cultural and personal psyche and have us inhabit a world that could only exist in a *Care Bears* movie.

More attention needs to be paid to how film communicates; to how a viewer interacts with a film; to how an audience identifies with films. One cannot possibly understand these spaces of engagement if one covers them from their source — the films themselves. Most importantly, one cannot even get near to discussing the core problematics (absent by design in this article) of sexual politics and ideological control if one first doesn't acknowledge the films (or TV shows or magazines, etc.) as specific cultural artifacts. Forget the statistics for a moment: next time you're in a theatre and everyone hysterically laughs when the possessed zombie chews off her own hand — listen to the laughter.



PUTTING P



Pornography, particularly violent pornography, has become a focus for feminist debate. JOCELYNNE A. SCUTT argues that, rather than defending it or censoring it, we should bring porn into the realm of sex discrimination.

The pornography debate involves two factions, both convinced of the validity of their stand. One, characterized by the extreme use of words like "kiddie porn" and "video nasties", is seen by the other as "right wing", the "women", or "forces of darkness". The second faction, calling themselves defenders of civil liberties, concentrates on "rights". Yet they are united in a vital respect: the desecrating concerns take no account of the social, economic and political subordination of women.

The so-called right wing agrees the notion that pornography is about the degradation of women's bodies and sexuality. To them, women's rights are irrelevant and children are the sole concern. Any woman protesting against male exploitation of women's bodies is classed selfish or misguided: any 'bad' woman's concerns, they say, should be met for herself, not for the 'right system'. For the so-called left group, female exploitation and degradation is subordinated to the right of men to see and do what they wish, in their own sexual terms. Certainly both groups may sometimes make a false obstacle to "women's rights", the argument being that if we do not allow men to view pornography, then some men will engage in sexual violence against real, live women. The underlying threat seems to be "Allow your nation to suffer exploitation and degradation in pornographic depictions, and allow your bodies to be paraded vicariously on screen in willing agonies of

sexual display — or else, ladies, you will suffer these indignities, that exploitation and degradation to your own bodies."

If the 'right wing' looks at women as all in the debate, it does so through a distorted lens. To those on the right, any naked picture of a woman is unacceptable, unless classed in these terms as "high art" — which means some long dead painter painted it, and the lady's long dead too. To those on the right calling for banning of pornographic films and videos, the concern is not for living, breathing women. It is the perpetuation of the myth of the 'true' woman, the 'good' woman, as paragon on a pedestal. This image serves the right well, for it emphasises female subordination. The style conforms to what is most convenient for the dominant group — namely, the good wife and mother caring tidily for the children, producing three hot meals a day (weekly), and picking up socks and wet towels from bathroom floors (daily). And walking carefully through the wet moppet, hot wash, damp underwear. Just as women in forced sexual poses represent a denial of humanity to half the human race, putting women in forced postured poses on pedlars' displays that half the same humanity.

The 'left wing' talks about freedom of speech and the right to privacy. Yet when civil libertarians invoke freedom of speech in defence of one gloriously peddling pornography, or newsgroups leading their shavies with magazines depicting women as lumps

PORN IN CHECK

of flesh with no nerve, no personality, no autonomy, or video prisms selling their wares as asset markers, their voices are almost drowned out in the storm of intensity. The days of narrative unitariness in Australia have nothing to recommend them, and they did not prevent fast bucks from being made on blue movies and porn magazines in plastic wrappers. Freedom of speech for pornographers is never at risk in a society which glorifies the subordination of women, promotes it, or simply tolerates it. It is women's voices that are silenced by the pornographers, who are supported by so-called civil libertarians defending the rights to free speech of those peddling pornography. Until women have equal access to economic and social freedom, and to political forums, talk of free speech for women is empty.

The left says viewing pornographic movies in the privacy of the home is and should be acceptable, no standard but the home owner's should be enforced at the hearth. But this argument is used against intervention in private homes where the 'man of the house' beats, bathes, rapes and abuses his wife. All members of a household should have equal rights to determine what happens in it. But when the left talks about the privacy of the home they too often ignore the fact that the desires of head of household and 'subordinate' are not necessarily identical. And whether in the home or without, physical, psychological and sexual violence debasing, and sexually humiliating to women should not be tolerated or encouraged.

In talking about privacy and freedom, it is odd that where women are concerned, the words are more often used when they involve the potential exploitation of women's bodies and women's sexuality. Those talking of 'freedom' in the context of pornography talk of a woman's right to participate in pornographic films. But what is the validity of the professed choice women have, in a country where they still earn only 65 per cent of men's pay (where women earn any money at all), despite decisions allegedly securing equal pay. We live in a world where the legislative rights of women workers to appropriate pay levels are ignored or



"The effects of TV violence vary, of course, according to the program. Pastoral, religious, humanitarian have been found to increase rather than decrease sensitivity to violence. However, when the purpose of the violence is to excite or arouse the viewer or portray violence as a successful way to resolve a conflict, the results have been quite harmful. Research shows that the most common effects are major increases in anger and hostility, loss of empathy, increased sexual aggression, increased fear and anxiety, and a diminished tolerance towards violence. Increases in fighting, cheating and delinquency, decreases in sharing, etc., co-operation increases in aggression, willingness to harm and actual violence whatever these all occur repeatedly."

"Research clearly suggests that in our yet to be known that entertainment violence increases racism, sexism, opposition to free political speech, opposition to foreign aid, and support for authoritarian rather than democratic forms of government."

—National Coalition on Television Violence, NCTV News, Volume 4 No. 2, May 1982



going through the court or tribunal is wrong, then women exercise our right to protest against the decision, by explicitly describing to the public the nature of the pornography exploitation and showing how out of touch with feminist standards courts or tribunals are.

Real Sexual Freedom

There is every reason to believe that the cause of equal rights for women (and a consequent increase in real happiness for women and men) will be advanced if a definition of pornography is included in sex discrimination legislation. Perverts do not want or need censorship, which would allow others to impose sexual standards, standards over which it is certain feminists would have no control. What women need is forums in which our right can be expressed, to speak out loudly against the exploitation of women through whatever means. Surely this is freedom of speech.

Other wrongs equally require redress. Oppression of women is not manufactured through pornography alone. Other pastoral depictions are equally harmful — like sexual advertising, that women appear to foolish gals in soap operas; that women rarely read serious news or are used in trivial roles in the media. These require equal attention.

Yet what is both sinister thing and at the same time reassuring is that whenever women speak out against sexual oppression of women, the change laid at our door is that we are engaging in sexual repression. So, back to this beginning: we live in a world where the liberation of women — the lifting of women's sexual oppression — is viewed by the dominant propaganda as an encroachment on their liberties. We live in a world where women's oppression is bound up with the liberation of men. Their liberty to do as they want with and to women's bodies, whether it be our real bodies, or the real bodies of women depicted on screen as representing all women, is seen as at risk when feminists protest. The civil liberties of women are inextricably interwoven with civil liberties of men. The traditional (male) view of their own civil liberties is a mere denying women freedom of speech, freedom of sexuality, and freedom to define our own sexuality, to be sexual subjects rather than the sexual objects which potently fill the porno movie houses, the blue videos, the sexist advertising screens which picture and mirror our world.



Australian audiences are not

allowed to see *Driller Killer*, *Lessie*

***In Action*, *Colour Me Blood Red*. In**

the past, they have been prevented

from seeing *Applause*, *Ten Days That*

Shook The World*, *All Quiet On The

***Western Front* and *I Love, You Love*.**

MARK SPRATT looks at the

current operations of film censor-

ship in Australia.



CENSORSHIP:

HOW YOU SEE IT, HOW YOU DON'T

Australia's four-category classification system is simple and inflexible. Since the introduction of the R rating in 1970 it has also been widely perceived as progressive and lenient. Controversy flares every year or so when film festivals find their imports under scrutiny or rejection (*Solo*, *Passion*) or a film like the Australian Film Institute's import *Deutschland, Deutschland* is knocked back. Two recent highly publicized controversies have brought the Film Censorship Board back into the limelight, the accusations made by religious groups that the Board had failed in its duty to ban Godard's *Hot Mary* on grounds of alleged "blasphemy", and criticism from critics and the public at the R rating awarded to *Dogs in Space*.

The R given to the unjustly maligned *Hot Mary* is a case of the Board's extreme self-protection, knowing the controversial history of the film. In NZ, where the film was shown at festivals without incident, it has a CIA rating, roughly equivalent to an M. *The Dogs in Space* decision, reinforced by the Board of Review, indicates nervousness on the side of caution in dealing with equally sensitive subjects. Cautious and would-be censors fall into traps of pure apathy. To deny children and teenagers scores of scenes of anti-social activity (big drug abuse) is somehow to protect them from encountering the same problems as real life. Ergo, the drug problem will vanish. Clean up the screens and you clean up the streets.

An interesting piece by law professor Alan Dershowitz in *American Film*, November 1986, points out that during the years the Hays Office Code decreed to American filmmakers that films must show that crime does not pay and the legal and justice systems to be reliable "some of the worst criminal-justice abuses prevailed—police and judicial corruption and racial inequality".

Drug abuse has become a flavor of the month for censorship boards worldwide. If one is to believe an American survey of 53,400 individuals, fully 96 per cent of the

public want a rating indicating "substance abuse" while 90 per cent want films with drug scenes to be X rated. The American rating board has taken a tougher stand on drugs, meaning in effect there are further reasons American filmmakers may be forced to make compromises in their works to negotiate lower ratings. Roughly a third of the films released in Australia are American and have already run the gamut of the American rating board. *9½ Weeks* and *Crimes of Passion* are two rare examples where Australia was venous stronger than those in American offices.

A few years back the cause in which censors were engaging themselves was "child pornography". Australia took the blinkered approach by giving an R rating to *Christine F.*, a grim factual story of a 14-year old Berlin girl's descent into heroin addiction and prostitution. The film was also out to console old supporters to the girl's age. Another example concerns the British release of *Pretty Baby* and an virtual instance of censorship at the fourth dimension. *Pretty Baby's* release coincided with some hastily enacted child pornography legislation in the U.K. The British censor agonized for more than a year as to whether Louis Malle's work fell into this category, finally reaching a solution in which a scene in which Brooke Shields reclines, ostensibly nude, on a couch, would be paraded with a yellow dye to thwart the unwholesome gaze of eagle-eyed parents and also to cut some shots in which she takes a bath. It was not the views of Shields' back in the bath that were cut, but those of a male actor watching her. If the British public did not view those shots there had been no possible exploitation of the young actress on set a couple of years earlier!

The following is a listing of some decisions made by the Board and Board of Review between October

1985 and December 1986. An explanatory key is given in the table on page 29.

Oct. 85 — Appeal dismissed against R for *Concordia*, *Fear City*, previously refused, granted R V (frags on videotape).

Nov. 85 — Refused classification. *Death Wish 3*, V (frags) at 2479-80 scenes and *Protein Death 3* (frags).

Death Wish up passed R at 2221-83 on V (frags), previously refused at 2271 on Appeal dismissed against R for *Invaders USA*.

Appeals upheld reducing *Juggled Edge* from R to M and *Return to Oz* from PG to G.

Jan. 86 — Appeal upheld reducing *Out of Africa* from M to PG.

Feb. 86 — Refused classification. *Day of the Dead V* (frags).

March 86 — Death Wish 3 registered R V (frags) at 2266-70 on V.

April 86 — Refused classification. *Sudden Death 2* (Christina Scott violence) at 2468-70 on V and *History of Violence 5* (frags) (Christina Scott violence).

Registered R with cuts. *Cole Fash 3* (frags) cuts 33-36 1 min 10 sec. NB: *Cole Fash* is also registered under its X category tape.

Appeal upheld reducing *Dark Force* from R V (frags) at 3512-66 on to M at 2784-85 on. This striping was made by the distributor for commercial reasons that also reduced the amount of violence.

June 86 — Appeal dismissed against R for *Cobra*.

Appeal upheld reducing *Raw Deal* from R to M.

Aug. 86 — Appeal upheld reducing *Running Scared* from R V (frags) (Aussie-only concept) to M.

Sept. 86 — Appeals upheld. Reducing *Dead End Drive in Frags* R L (frags) 3 (frags) (Aussie social concept) to M, reducing *More Less* from R L (frags) V (frags) (Aussie concept) to M, reducing *Schindler* from R V (frags) to M.

Appeal dismissed against R for *Stripper 2* (Katherine Mulvaney).

Refused Classification — *Sudden Death 2* (Christina Scott violence).

An Adelaide letter of two has invented a device which stops TV sets screening out any violence when children are watching. Computer systems allow Dennis Wild and his TV engineer friend Kym Adcox believe that the tamper-proof game, which blocks out offending programs upon receiving a coded electronic signal, is a world first.

—The Sun, 2 August 1986

at \$425.00 on. (This film is finally classified R. V (Violence) & (Sex) at \$110.98 on. *Final Australian Assessment 2 V (Violence) & (Sex) Submitted for the Australian video festival and refused under the NSW Film and Video Tapes Classification Act 1984, Section 9 (5) (b) Rev. B5 - Appeal against refusal: *Heartbreak Ridge R. I. (R) in its presenting a warning is directed to all adolescents advising that 'Language used in this film may offend'.**

The above reveals a lot about the Board's preoccupations, particularly its hard line on the violent vigilante genre or films depicting some level of social breakdown. The Board of Review has performed a few valuable functions, particularly in perceiving that the realistic violence in *Sahwaj* should not be treated in the same way as that in, say, *Cobra*. The Board's attitude to splatter and horror films is more nebulous. As scholars of the genre will know, some quite extraordinary horror films have been released on video, yet we are denied what are undoubtedly two of the better examples, with frequent overseas critical comment behind them, George Romero's *Day of the Dead* and Tobe Hooper's *Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2*. Are they simply too good (ie disturbing)? And why have two of H.G. Lewis' 'goat trilogy' been passed, *2000 Maniacs* and *Blood Feast*, but not the third (*Color Me Blood Red*)?

The *Heartbreak Ridge* appeal is significant as it opens a crack in the

"In one moment PKA erupts, and in Lebanon, rain in New Orleans, fighting in El Salvador, Mozambique, Kampuchea. The search for the remains of a missing man; an alienated family in Africa - all had common features of violence and extreme brutality and suffering, with bodies flying in front of the camera, with tears of blood and bloody sweat. What is all this doing to young children, I shudder to think."

Australian Cinema's Television Action Committee meeting, June 1985

arbitrary edifice of the rating system, weakening its paternalism and placing some of the responsibility for what people may wish themselves or their children to see back on to the public. New Zealand has a highly flexible system, seemingly inventing a new category for each film. The NZ R rating has a range of age limits (13, 16, 18, 20) together with written warnings about content and provision for parents to take children to certain R films. It's a nightmare for exhibitors but a better consumer guide.

In addition to the above cinema feature documents, the Board also refused classification to over 300 sexually explicit videotapes, almost all on grounds of "grossness sexual violence". If this number seems gratuitous it must be noted that for some reason many of the same titles are submitted repeatedly and that most of the submissions are made by the NSW or Victorian Police, since these States banned X videos. (One point of interest is that in October 1985 the Victorian Police rounded up and submitted tapes of *Bellini's City of Women* and a double tape of *The Long Good Friday* and *Queen - Live in Rio*. Both were duly passed.) The Board would appear to be on safe

ground here - there will be little opposition to banning films for "grossness sexual violence", unless one has seen a few of the films in question and has some doubts about the Board's definition of the term "grossness" and the importance of factors such as quality or context. There are distinctions to be made between films which may deal symbolically with an episode of sexual coercion (as *Alex De Wursey's Pretty Peachtree*) and those simply including a gratuitous episode (as *Small Town Girl*). It leaves us with the question whether a *Denise Coates* film or should be treated with the same even-handed justice as a *Meryl Streep* film would be.

In October 1984 the Board met with Commonwealth and State Ministers with censoring responsibilities, and they unanimously agreed to revise the guidelines for the amount of violence permissible in M and R films. This sounds suspiciously like vote-counting rhetoric: there will be less violence on screen and by inference less in your neighbourhood. In effect the Board has been stricter since 1984.

Former Chief Censor Janet Strickland has made several comments in favour of a more 'conservative' approach. "As the community becomes more socially conservative, the Board has a duty to reflect that in their decision-making," she told *The Sydney Sun* last year.

The chairman of the Board of Review, Queensland academic Peter Sheehan, said in April last year that some R-rated films which had been found acceptable three years ago would be now ruled out because of excessive violence.

"The Board has recently become stricter on its tolerance of aggression, in response to a shift in community standards expressing concern about the level of aggression in films," he said.

How has public opinion been effectively gauged? The Board in fact received only 15 letters criticising its decisions in 1985. Exhibitors will attest to the fact that the films which have caused most disputes among patrons regarding their suitability for children have been the G rated *Duney* films, *The Black Cockatoo* and *Return To Co.*



The Film Censorship Board is composed of a Chief and Deputy Censor and not more than 12 members.

It acts under Section 51 (1) of the Constitution — the regulation of trade and commerce under the Customs Act. Section 51 (1) of the Customs Act states the Governor-General may by regulation prohibit imports into Australia. The Customs (Censorship) Regulations 1984 prohibit imports from this section.

Regulation 3 establishes the Full-time Board examining Film/Videotapes for public exhibition on behalf of the State/Territories according to their legislation.²

Regulation 3B provides for a part-time Board of Review to which applicants may appeal against the Board's decisions.

In 1985 the Board examined 857 cinema features classified as follows: G — 55, PG — 137, M, 244, R — 113, Film Passed Examination — 381, Refused — 12. Of the 12 refused, three were for reasons of sex, sex and violence and three for combinations of sex, violence and sexual violence.

The Board of Review upheld eight appeals and dismissed five.

— *From the Film Censorship Board's Report on Activities 1985.*

"Although it is possible to make legislation that the Federal Film censorship Board of the States (with some exceptions, Western Australia and Queensland) the same has not been able to do. Censorship, in fact, has to come within laws which are drawn from responsibilities for that state. In Victoria and New South Wales it is the Film Censorship Board. The Minister for Arts is responsible for the censorship board in South Australia and in the same way it is the Film Censorship Board in the ACT." —

— The current members of the Film Censorship Board are: Kenneth Barker (Acting Chief Censor), David Hume (Acting Deputy Chief Censor), Graham Wood, Deborah Ehrlich, William Mann, Rosemary Barkworth, William Horne, Adrian Caraculski, Lisa Joanna Downer, Andrew Macpart Wright, Eve Midgton (Relief members).

— In May 1986, Janet Strickland announced she was retiring from the position of Chief Censor. The job was advertised one month later and, at time of writing, the 26 applicants had still not been notified by the Attorney-General's Department with whom responsibility for the appointment lies. Janet Strickland is now working as a private consultant, representing Village Roadshow and other companies in cinema appeals.



VAMPYR, Dreyer's 1929 classic

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HORROR MOVIES

edited by Phil Hardy
(Octopus, 1986, ISBN 0 7064 2771 8, \$29.95 hb)

It is hardly a revelation to observe that horror movies are designed to disturb. Indeed, upon collective fears in order to achieve their ends. Whether they summon an assembly of forces from beyond the grave or merely mobilise a lunatic with a wandering conscience, they present us with a collection of 'what if' scenarios which usually cloak an as night falls but which are not living to a thrill in the day light after. They also unleash a battery of defence mechanisms.

These come in a variety of forms. The most obvious has an official status and, as a result, many films are banned outright (a tale that has recently befallen George A. Romero's acclaimed *Day of the Dead* and Todd Hopper's *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre II*) reinforced to adult audiences or else delayed in line with some arbitrary measure of public preference.

Another entails the reassuring notion that, however grisling or realistic the scenes of terror might appear, they are only the stuff of the imagination; they are not Real. Perhaps they could be for a common truth of our time: has it that it only takes a slight turn of the screw, or a little displaced repression, and any one of us could turn him or her self-shuffling off to Buffalo, New York, for the moment they're not unless that movement behind you in the cinema sign has more than a passing deflection.

The acknowledgement of a third kind of safety zone finds us on a more complicated terrain. Here the 'experts' — social logists, psychologists, critics

journalists and any other viewers so inclined — can find a sanctuary of sorts in their professional assignments, putting the horror at a distance by defining it, classifying it and creating an analytical framework for making sense of it. Against the immediate experience of the horrible things happening on the screen, then, the experts are able to create a kind of intellectual cocoon.

The hope is that we expect to learn something from them about our own responses and about the films themselves. The problem is that it is only rarely that one finds a response to these films that is concerned to deal with them beyond the most superficial level. Instead — and most journalists reviewing is especially culpable here — they are generally denied substantial consideration as individual works and lumped together as 'exploitation films' or 'video nasties' or else laughably reduced to statistics about violent acts. It appears to be a lot easier to regard the lot with a batch of righteous indignation than to explore their differences because then one would actually have to think about them, to look for ways of making sense of them, and of our responses to them. As Phil Hardy points out in his introduction to *The Encyclopedia of Horror Movies*, horror remains the most probing and problematic of film genres and has one most in need of examination.

The position is not entirely hopeless, however. A considerable amount of serious exploratory work has been done on the horror film in recent years,

encouraging an understanding of it and of its persistent popularity that puts to shame the amnesia that have dogged discussions of it for too long. Two books in particular deserve mention in passing here: both are collections of essays. *The American Nightmares*, edited by Robin Wood and Richard Lippe (Festival of Festivals, Toronto, 1979), and *Monks of Fear: Essays on the Horror Film*, edited by Barry Keith Grant (The Scarecrow Press, New Jersey & London, 1984). Both recognise that making sense of the genre does not simply require the separation of the good films from the bad, though such a project is an important one, even if the criteria for this separation are notoriously difficult to define. The key issue is the cultural phenomenon that horror films represent. As Robin Wood puts it: 'One might say that the true subject of the horror genre is the struggle for recognition of all that our civilization represses or suppresses as its emergence threatened as in our nightmares, as an object of terror, a matter for terror, the happy ending (when it exists) typically signifying the restoration of repression.'

Hardy's entry into the field is the lived in a series of Encyclopaedias which he has edited and which are devoted to popular genres — the previous two dealt with *The Western* and with *Science Fiction* and more are promised. It lacks the coherence of critical perspectives that one might have wished for, but it is an indispensable reference work nonetheless (as are the others in the series). Its listings are arranged chronologically and are supported by an alphabetical index at the back. Inevitably, they are incomplete, and this is implicitly acknowledged, but the book is, as Hardy's preface claims, the most comprehensive overview of the genre ever published. It is also beautifully laid out.

A minor drawback is that, be-

cause of the complications of genre definitions, it had to be used in conjunction with the volume on science fiction. Hardy produces a reasonable case for the inclusion of, for example, the creature features of the 1950s and the films of David Cronenberg in the latter book. However, a little confusion arises when one finds entries in both books for the various Frankenstein films and to the several versions of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, amongst others. One's sense of order is more substantially disturbed, however, when *Night of the Living Dead* makes it into both books, but *Days of the Dead* only rates a mention in the science-fiction one.

The impulse to quibble in this way, however, should be belatedly agreed the real benefits to be gained from the book lie in its examples, particularly useful for the introduction it provides to a range of national cinemas, including Mexican, Japanese and Spanish, which bolsters in the genre have as covered little mention elsewhere. And as a delving of credits is as far as I can get, appreciate, although the significant contribution of the composer is curiously overlooked.

The discussion of individual films produces a very mixed bag, for while some entries do qualify as the 'informed critical comment' promised in the preface, others most certainly do not. Many contain a lot of useful information about the history of particular productions, about the proliferation of subgenres — films about mad doctors, women in peril, Medieval Authority, teenagers in jeopardy, games, children, heads piling their reavings, and so on — and about lesser known sectors of the genre, such as the prolific Juan Pardo, whose decline is chronicled across the years, and through his abundance of pseudonyms (although the absence of a director's index means that

FRANKENSTEIN AND THE CREATOR, FROM *HELL*, David Smith's *Vampyr*. Please excuse its limits with art

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it is up to the reader to draw this out). There is also a fascinating collection of anecdotes to be mined — for example about director/producer Ray Dennis Steckler, who used to seek attention for his films by having fully made-up members of his casts jump out from behind the screen at key moments during performances and abduct members of the audience. Then there is the oddity of *Desolate* (1978), filmed entirely in Gaelic and dumb sign language (though with a voice-over commentary providing a literal translation) by a director who was responsible for America's first TV broadcast in sign language!

All this notwithstanding, the erudite quality of many of the observations about individual films and filmmakers is rather unsettling. It is not just a question of my disagreement with particular assessments, though I confess that this is the *De Palma* campaign (the approving entry on *Body Double* aside) made my blood boil. The error ridden comments of *Caine* reveal a lot more about their author's predispositions than they do about the film, and the one on *Cries* to Hell is so abbreviated and ill informed as to appear a deliberate act of provocation.

More worrying however is the way the entries have an air of objectivity borrowed upon from despite the abandon with which they hurl their opinions about unnamed things come to represent an encyclopaedic voice of authority something which the letting of contributors (mostly of the Monthly Film Bulletin school) at the fore of the book does little to disguise. The opportunity for ongoing analytical and evaluative disagreements that could have injected some real critical excitement into the book is thus lost. And in its place are what are up looking like contradictions as when the entry for *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* effuses about Tobe Hooper's later film "the excellent *The Funhouse*", which 46 pages later, we are told is disappointingly regrett.

That said, the *Encyclopedia of Horror Movies* is extremely useful as a reference and as a potted history of the genre, both for the casual reader and the scholar. It may not qualify as a "serious critical work" in the terms described earlier, but much of it is not only clearly informed by that work, but also provides an essential ground-work for it.

Tom Ayres



TEETH AND SMILES: Jack Torrance Robert De Niro in *The Shining*

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

by Louis Goldman (Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, 1988, ISBN 0 8109 1324 0, \$87.00)

Of the many large-format books of movie photographs, Louis Goldman's *Lights, Camera, Action!* is particularly interesting, for it focuses not on an era, a studio or a genre, but is a selection from the output of one still photographer.

As Goldman writes, the on-location photographer is a "mole". His very presence in the formidable machinery is incongruous. Of all the assembled technicians, he is the only one who does not contribute directly to what finally appears on the screen.

"Yet he continues..." he musing on the fringe of the pandemonium, provides a unique vantage point from which I (and) observe the world of movies intimately.

The still photographer's primary task, of course, is to provide sufficient high-quality stills to promote the film, whether those stills become lobby cards, are used in a poster or illustrate articles in the press media. Such a function is both restrictive (justifiably so) and frustrating (no one's presence on the set seems more annoying to, and demanding of, actors and other crew than the still photographer is).

In Hollywood's heyday of the 1940s, the still photographer's art was directed at convincing the studio's stars. Little attempt was made at veracity; actors could be posed together even if they never made the same scene; together stills could be tried even if the film was monochromatic and the backgrounds were often massive. Of course, consumers didn't mind;

they believed in the star system as much as the studios did.

As cinema edged towards realism and the director began to assume more focus, so the emphasis of production stills changed. They became more accurate renderings of the film's content and tone. In general, they also lost a lot of magic.

Some directors became quite purist about the new approach. The photographer would be asked to only take stills from the position of the movie camera, using a matching lens and reproducing the same composition, lighting, depth of field, etc. While limiting the photographer's creative freedom, such an approach does ensure that the resultant stills accurately capture the look and mood of a film. They are also the preferred choice of poster and magazine editors who want the accuracy, but not the mundanity of frame enlargements (much needed in those days of structuralist criticism).

Generally, though, photographers are left to their own devices; the producer and distributor insist that out of the thousands of negatives taken, some will do the marketing job. Goldman, on the strength of the selection in his book, is a fan of the photographer, defining respect and capturing those moments he finds the most quirky, amusing or informative about the filmmaking process. For this, as Goldman's real concern how movies are made.

As he writes, "During the 25 years that I worked as a still photographer, I was constantly

struck by a paradox: the general public is fascinated by movies but knows little of what it takes to put one on the screen. Out actors are not often permitted to watch the shooting of movies; they have to get clearance or be someone's guest. In this book, you are my guest!

It is difficult to guess how each reader will respond to the technical photographs and whether the on-location stills do sufficiently convey the process of filmmaking, though the short and amusing text is a good adjunct. This reader is stymied in having visited many films in production and thus views that photographs differently from one who hasn't. Without a doubt though, this book is a pleasure, whereas a location visit rarely is. *After a brief introduction by Gregory Peck, the book opens with Directors At Work...*

At Work... is a short but exclusive collection of stills of directors brooding about their art of hand. There is Alan J. Pakula in an empty courtroom for *All the President's Men*; Joseph Losey looking troubled about *Moby-Dick*; Barbet Starobin Spielberg lovingly atop his shark from *Jaws*.

The Technical Side and *Roll 'Em* shows movies in the making, from *Exodus* in 1960 to *A Group Line* (1986). Most are informative (the disturbing image of a lost girl's high above the location on *Blow Out*); many are humorous (the contest of loach between producer Richard Zanuck and the *Jaws* shark) some deeply moving.

Here, of course, are ventures into highly subjective territory; reacting is one thing to favour the film or people as much as to Goldman's obvious aesthetic and technical skills. For this reader, the four haunting stills from Robert Rossen's *Lili* in themselves make the book insured. One rarely gets the chance to see the perfect film (*Saved* Station showed the un-generated version for the first time in Australia some years ago at the Sydney Film Festival); and in those long gaps between screenings one was left to contribute the daunting task of tracking down J.R. Sjöman's novel. But now there are Goldman's precious stills.

Singing out these four stills is, of course, an injustice to the book. All the photographs are interesting and most are as good as the still photographer's art has produced. They are matched by superb printing ensuring a book which easily claims right to inclusion on any film-lover's bookshelf.

Scott Murray

THE MAN IN THE

● WHO SHOT NED KELLY? ● WHO PLAYED NED KELLY? THE HERO OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST IN FILM AND THEATRE, HAS AN INTRIGUING THEORY THAT LINKS AUSTRALIA'S



MAN IN UNIFORM: Raymond Langford, around 1910

Newspaper ad for *The Kelly Gang*



About a decade ago film historians thought they'd finally caught at least some of the Kelly Gang. They'd tramped around the Melbourne suburbs of Heidelberg where *The Story of the Kelly Gang*, Australia's and perhaps the world's first feature film, was supposed to have been shot in the second half of 1906. They'd trawled down possum advertisements, and rumored in old newspapers which supported this claim by showing that it ran for over an hour, rather than three times longer than any previous filmed dramatic work. They'd located the names of people who claimed to have been involved in making it, and even found a few minutes of the film itself.

An extra bonus: most of the film turned up in 1982 on a Melbourne rubbish tip. (See Cinema Papers 36, February 1982.) In all about 200 feet (61 meters) has survived, though many frames are ruined by blotches in the decaying nitrate film. But clearly visible are Constable Fitzpatrick's usual advances to Kate Kelly and his fight with the winging Ned at the start of the film; the Stringfellow Creek massacre; the Glenrowan siege; and Ned's capture at the end.

Although there were inconsistencies, it was assumed, by faulty measures, the story of how it came to be made seemed plausible enough. The film was supposed to have been directed by Charles Tait, who wrote the script with his brother John. There were five Tait brothers, all of whom became theatrical entrepreneurs. In later life they ran some very struggling, if not enterprising, empires of I.C. Williamson's. Two St. Kilda clerics who had moved into film producing, Wilford Johnson and William Gibson, had worked the cameras, developed the film and perhaps edited it. All this was based on later memories: the contemporary evidence was less clear. Certainly Johnson and Gibson and their photographic work, certainly "T & N" marketed the film during its first Melbourne screenings, beginning on 26 December 1906.

But in the last of the seven large leather-bound Books of Registration of Copyright Holders in Literary, Dramatic and Musical Works which the Victorian Patents Office kept between 1878 and 1937 there is a mystery. On 14 December 1906 the copyright officer slipped his pen and wrote the number

11,449, then. A sheet of letterpress entitled Advertisement of the set of moving pictures entitled *The Kelly Gang* — and there in the column for the names of the copyright holders, Robert Hollywood and Dan Barry, names that no one has ever connected with the world's first feature film.

It is at least plausible that Dan Barry, the outbreak actor manager whose theatre company was known in every back town between North Queensland and Tasmania, was involved in making the film. Born in Dublin in 1851, Barry, like most actors of his day, knocked a few years off his age and claimed in the *Hobart Mercury* on 17 October 1903 to have been born in Melbourne in 1859. From 1886, when he registered a play *Scenes in Alone* in London, he was well known to the Victorian copyright office, dropping in at regular intervals to enter the names of the dramas he had patented throughout Eastern Australia.

Many of these plays he wrote himself, like *Black Thursday* or, *The Ray of the Flame*, a melodrama about the disastrous Victorian bushfires of 1851 that had devastated the state in Tasmania. Dan Barry also presented plays by other Melbourneans; these included *The Captives* by A.J. Byrne of Richmond, a controversial piece which showed Christ returning to Earth in the middle of the Anzacian Civil War, and *The Kelly Gang* by "King Roda of Fitzroy". Set staged on 12 February 1898 in Melbourne.

King Roda is relatively easy to pin down. There had been a number of plays based around the exploits of the Kellys while the gang was on the run between 1878 and 1880, and even after the Glenrowan siege and Ned's capture. Some had died a natural death, while Ned, at least one like him, had been suppressed by the authorities. Kelly plays — and films — usually claimed to teach a great moral lesson about honesty being the best.



THE IRON MASK

FEATURE FILM IS STILL AN ENIGMA. RICHARD FOTHERINGHAM, A QUEENSLAND LECTURER FAVOURITE OUTLAW WITH ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S FOREMOST FILM PIONEERS.

polity and crime not playing etc. but audiences had an unfortunate habit of choosing every line the Terror at the North Coast appeared, and howling with laughter at the efforts at the police to catch him.

In 1890 one of the major actor managers of the time, Alfred Dampier, got together with the Melbourne journalist Ernest Welch and obtained Rolf Boldrewood's permission to dramatise his very moral novel about bushbanging, *Robbery Under Arms*. However they took some liberty with the story. They had a corrupt policeman modelling Alfred Maudsley, which everyone recognised as a reference to Constable Fitzpatrick and Kate Kelly, and the fourth act ended with a siege at a farmhouse which the police set on fire, just as had happened at the Glenelg Hotel. Dampier and Welch also invented two comic Irish coppers, McConno and O'Hara, who displayed a distinct lack of devotion to duty. Audiences loved the play to the extent of 41 performances at Melbourne's Alexandra Theatre, and a particular favourite was Trooper O'Hara played by Mr Reg Rode.

It is not surprising therefore that when Dan Barry turned up at the same theatre eight years later with *The Kelly Gang* — in which Mr Reg Rode played Trooper Mulvaney, one of two Irish constables — Who Dan I Reck Their Dairly — the Age commented that "there were scenes which bore a resemblance to the dramatization of Rolf Boldrewood's book *Robbery Under Arms*". However this was purework, for Rode's authorship was never publicly acknowledged.

A more formidable paragon of Dan Barry as Ford Kelly was Sergeant Steele the brave policeman who eventually captured him at Glenelg. Steele was played by one Henry Stansham who had also been in *Robbery Under Arms*, though on the other side of the law. Stansham was (Dan Mason, Boldrewood's

thinly-disguised portrait of Ned Kelly, whose I Eyes Glittered like a Black Snake's". Both Rode and Stansham were still with Barry in 1903 when *The Kelly Gang* was performed on the last Saturday night of a two week season in Hobart. As it happens it drew a huge audience. It was sold a play after which it was advisable to leave town in a hurry and by the time the Hobart identity had been so disapproved, Barry, Rode, Stansham and company were in Devonport.

Where Dan Barry had gone, others quickly followed, and Kelly plays sprang up all over the continent. Some of the other Kelly Gang plays (Barbara 1906) were: *Reverend Inman* (Bushman I Colin's Hands Up) first staged in Glenelg on 27 September 1898, John Henry Gaunt's *The Career of the Kelly Gang* on 6 May 1899 at Charters Towers, Arnold Denham's *The Kelly Gang* on 22 July 1899 in Sydney, and Lancelotti Booth's *Outlaw Kelly* three weeks later and also in Sydney, but probably only a copyright reading before a NSW country tour. Rode had stolen from Dampier and Welch, and some of these other Kelly plays were clearly based, borrowed or stolen from Rode. Arnold Denham's Sydney version even had two more, *Reverend Sons of Erin* (the time called *Mulvaney and Murphy*). The respectable theatre managers and producers were dismayed, but the authorities took no action, and while these straggling subversives wandered around the country for the next decade killing wage policemen, local politicians controlled the boards trying to get on.

Which brings us to Melbourne: the second half of 1906, and the film *The Story of the Kelly Gang*. "Bohemian" Cole was in town with his, *Australian Bushbanging Drama*, "King of the Road" but this was a story about Ben Hall, Walter Johnson and Gibson were giving a *Pantomime of the People's*. Concerts in the Temperance Hall, J & N Tait were screening pictures at the Town Hall and also promoting various theatrical and concert ventures. Dan Barry was also around Melbourne, on 16 October he copyrighted his "World Wide Wander Show", which had opened in Marengo 12 days earlier. Barry had often experimented with film as well as theatre — as early as May 1897 he had been promoting his "Famous English Cinematographer" at the Brisbane Theatre Royal.



MAN IN MASK: Ned Kelly in 1906, from enlargements from *The Story of The Kelly Gang* (overlaid National Film and Sound Archive).



Here the clues stop, and the questions begin. Was Barry a con-man, trying to cheat Gibson and the Tatts? Unlikely, since he faced a two-year jail sentence if he was caught. And in any case, why didn't the Tatts apply for copyright registration of the film, before or after Hollywood and Barry dealt? They knew about the copyright office — they had registered four pictures earlier that year. Only registered works were entitled to the benefits of the legislation — an unregistered film could be passed as well. The only possible conclusion on the evidence available is that Robert Hollywood and Dan Barry had a legitimate and unchallenged claim to the copyright whether fingers Gibson, Willard, and the Tatts had in the developing task.

If that is the case, then what control did Dan Barry have over the making of *The Story of The Kelly Gang*? His name is not mentioned by any subsequent commentator, either in *San Cien*, mentioned by Lady Viola Tatt in her history of the Tatts, *A Family of Brothers*, as the assistant director, or a known actor in one of the stage productions. Unfortunately her book is based on distant memories rather than a study of the contemporary evidence, and is riddled with errors. Did Barry and his Kelly Gang play actors' games in the film? Probably, but there is only one pose photograph of Barry himself, published in Melbourne Punch after his death, and no known illustrations of any member of his company. None of the actors in the film has been positively identified.

There are other puzzles as well. Films and plays had to be first presented in public, and then registered for copyright, often by submitting an advertising poster as an exhibit (the "notice of telegraph"). The date of the Register entry is 14 December, nearly two weeks before the Tatts' *Blowing Dry* premiere. Viola Tatt mentions a week of country try-outs — did Barry screen the film out in country Victoria, his favourite stamping ground, before taking it to the Tatts for its Melbourne season?

And what happened afterwards? Some subsequent sources claim: "Direction of J. H. Tatt" (quite wrong). Clutching at straws, we might note that in 1920, in *Herald*, Barry had with him "an excellent orchestra led by Miss Bennett" and a "Ladies Orchestra" accompanied the film at a season at the Oxford Theatre in George Street, Sydney at the end of 1907.

Dan Barry died in custody at his Melbourne home on 1 July 1908. The police report on his assets makes no mention of royalties or returns from any of his many theatrical investments, but established that he was moderately wealthy. He owned a house and land, about £270 in various bank accounts, and his finest performing pant building, valued at one pound.

And there, until more clues come to light, that part of the story stops. But there is one more unsolved mystery — who was Robert Hollywood, whose name appeared before Barry's in the Register



entry? He is first heard of in *Soldiers of the Queen*, a Great War drama of Barry's, which can be traced through various copyright entries from its premiere in Ballarat on 9 November 1906, to York on 17 January 1908, and to Warwick in Queensland on 15 February. A postcard which Barry forwarded to the Brisbane Copyright Office has a Mr R. Hollywood as Claude Dreyfus, *A Young Soldier* known as the 'Dan Deal'.

For five years R. Hollywood or Hollywood was the juvenile leading actor in Barry's company, last noticed when Barry passed through Maitland in January 1905. In the same period Lila Byford was the company's leading lady, supported by an



older actor, Max Adams. Dan Barry himself was getting too old to be Ned Kelly, and other dashing young heroes, and often played comic bit-parts or in drag. Involvement: Reg Rode and Barry Stanham sometimes took a brief mention in the reviews as well.

After he copyrighted the Kelly Gang, film Robert Hollywood a never heard of again. But there is one other possibility recently suggested by Len Blaker, author of a forthcoming biography of Australia's most famous early film-maker and director of the internationally-acclaimed 1916 silent classic *The Sentimental Blake*. Was Robert Hollywood the early stage name of Raymond Holles Langford?



The early years of Raymond Langford's career have always been shrouded in mystery. All we know for certain is that he was born in 1878, was a seaman in 1896, was married in 1900, and started acting and directing in plays and films as Raymond Holles Langford between 1906 and 1911. He claimed to have been with a touring theatre company acting as Raymond Holles during the early years of the century, but a search of the *Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald* by the staff of the Australian Dictionary of Biography failed to find any trace of Raymond Holles or Raymond Langford, until the end of the decade.

The connection between Robert Hollywood and Raymond Holles Langford is the first possible clue to Langford's lost years. Most actors used assumed names — Dan Barry himself was really John Ransome Adams. It helped when debt collectors and angry lenders came looking for your fixed address. Langford had been born John Walter Holles, Holles was his mother's maiden name, and Raymond was a childhood invention to distinguish him from John Walter's father, or a later adoption when he left home as a teenager for a life on the screen stage. He was Raymond John Walter Langford, german, when he married the already pregnant Matilda Kinn in Sydney on Monday 5 February 1900. On Saturday 3 February Robert Hollywood, actor, had an engagement in Uncle Tom's Cabin in Tamworth, and is next heard of in *Soldiers of the Queen* in Warwick 12 days later. Did he have a few days rest and a hurried matrimonial engagement in Sydney, or did he continue up the north road?

If Robert Hollywood was Raymond Holles Langford, then two other mysteries still have to be solved. The first is why Langford failed to mention that he'd worked with Dan Barry, that his stage name was Hollywood and not Holles, and that he had worked on the film about the Kelly Gang. Was there a skeleton, along with the failed marriage, in Langford's film card? Or did his early filmmaking seem crude and unimportant compared to his major films? Busbywhang films were banned and condemned during most of Langford's creative years. It was certainly not wise for the great moving picture pioneer, who was still hoping to find backers for his next project, to boast about having been associated with a scoundrel film about policemen being shot and ridiculed to the cheers of a packed house. In old age, Langford did vaguely remember starring his career making busbywhang films, but in Sydney, not Melbourne.

Langford finally mentioned *The Story of The Kelly Gang* in his interview to the 1937 Royal Commission into the Moving Picture Industry in Australia, he used William Gibson had "produced" it. This was a calculated insult. William Gibson the young chemist was indeed the name Mr A. Gibson who as head of Australian Films was doing his best to kill Australian

film production. Longford's films, in particular. He was also the Gibson who as John Tulloch points out in *Legends on the Screen*, was complaining that "crude bushranger films kept the decent class of patrons away from the cinema."

The final mystery is the one we started with — who did what in making *The Story of Kate Kelly*? It's long been suspected that the Tatts may have overstated their contribution, though they probably had a partial financial involvement. Perhaps they also shot supplementary footage such as a better version of Kate Kelly's side which was later added to some parts of the film. William Gibson seems to have had the role closest to what we would now consider the film director's job: organizing the film schedule, choosing locations, planning the shots with the cameraman who was also his business partner, William Johnson, and supervising the editing. But copyright was claimed by writers, and assigned to financial producers, not stage or film directors. The column where assigned rights were noted is blank.

What the Register entry probably indicates therefore is that Robert Holliday and Dan Barry wrote the screenplay, put up some of the money and negotiated with Gibson and the Tatts for the most important and rehearsed principal actors, and played parts themselves. Barry's leading actress, Lily Bayford, is the most likely candidate for Kate Kelly, with this *Adam* as the outlined mother. Though this is likely to give little known roles to unknown faces. The lecherous and rather comic Constable Fitzpatrick in the first surviving scene of the film has a larger hooded nose surprisingly similar to that in the mural and a similar photograph of Dan Barry himself. Reg Rade and Harry Stone are probably these too, though why Rade was not part of the writing team is a mystery. There is a key surviving scene in the film, just before Strawberry Creek, where two comic cops (Lampan and MacIntyre) practice shooting, quite unaware that the Kellys are nearby. Sergeant Steele brings down Ned at the end, though it takes six policemen to subdue him.

Then what about Ned Kelly himself? It is hard to see him clearly: the actor had a very full beard and the end of the film where his helmet is removed by the police is in parts badly blotched. He is also made up — in fact he looks remarkably like Ned Kelly in the photograph taken shortly before he was hanged, with his curly hair parted on the right. The actor was a very tall, strong, broad based young man, and could well have been the leading young actor in Dan Barry's *Dramatic Company* — Robert Holliday. Did Raymond Hollis Longford, who parted his straight hair on the left like most men but who was certainly tall, strong and broad based, start his long career in Australian film as Ned Kelly, the Terror of the North? Or, the Iron-Clad Bushranger of Australia?

UNLOCKING THE ARCHIVE'S SECRETS

ARCHIVES ARE STILL A RICH SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE EARLY AUSTRALIAN FILM INDUSTRY. ROSS COOPER REPORTS ON DISCOVERIES PAST AND PRESENT.



Charles Chomel illustrating Captain Applehead



The Fitzpatrick photo, Leslie Lloyd and Arthur Storchert



Harry Stone in the role of Ned Kelly, with a caption: Harry Stone in the role of Ned Kelly, with a caption: Harry Stone in the role of Ned Kelly.

Film is an ephemeral material: it is mostly discarded, or is destroyed over time. That film history by its very nature, especially in Australia, is a difficult area. So much has been lost, not only most of the films themselves, but also the documentation surrounding them. Even so, it has always been exciting to think that perhaps somewhere in the depths of government archives we will discover full scripts, synopses, letters, postcards, with and without early Australian filmstrips.

In 1968, while I was researching my MA thesis on "Origins of Film in Australia, 1896 to 1915", I spent several months at the two Commonwealth Archives, at that time housed in an old one-story hanger building down by Lake Burley Griffin. I was directed mainly to records in the PM's department and External Affairs for early letters from cinematographers and the government's reaction to this new medium. The fact that most of the film had been destroyed shows the importance the government placed on film in those early days of this century. It was often heartbreaking to go on the trail of a really thick file, to follow the vein through several years, only to find the desired "file destroyed" stamp at the end of my search.

I left the Commonwealth Archives in Canberra and went to Sydney, where so many of the early films were made. I wanted to go through the New South Wales archives again, which I could then view in a back room at the Mitchell Library. I decided to look in the Chief Secretary's report under "The Theatre and Public Moral Act, 1908", and soon came across the bonanza heading of "Prohibited and Objectionable Films".

To my horror and delight, I discovered that the NSW Chief Secretary had been ordering a strict form of censorship via the police in his department. Filmmakers had to submit synopses, but the practice had also grown up by the 1920s of



requiring them to submit full scripts of films they intended to make. Such government interference is intolerable but it is also a great boon for film archivists, because it means that a wealth of material still survives in the form of scripts, correspondence, posters, programmes etc. which have long been thought to be lost. It was there in October 1969 that I discovered a full shooting script of Raymond Longford's *The Sentimental Bloke* which to us outsiders have been lost to us forever.

In 1970, when Andrew Pike and I were finishing *Australian Film 1900-1977* (OUP, 1980), Andrew checked out the copyright holdings of the Commonwealth Archives, and discovered an important cache that still remains the richest concentration of stills in the archive from the early period. Among others from W J. Lincoln's Melbourne-based filmmaking there were stills and scripts of *The Sea Stockade*. However at that time, Andrew was very busy and did not press for further film. (Had he done so he might have found that the copyright department had three film and stage material in three different places. In 'set one' which Andrew consulted, the copyright application was kept, sometimes with the script if it were thin, and occasionally stills from the film. Unlike the US Library of Congress holdings, which give us the best findings that there might be a wider material in the copyright section of the archives, Australia never required a still from each scene or frame, reproduced on paper. Still less (if you have lost it) was where that script were held, while 'set three' was where bulky exhibitors like sculptors, disc recordings and large plaques were filed.)

Last year, in a stroke of sheer serendipity, a PhD researcher from Queensland, Richard Forthright, took into a sack of well-preserved stage and film scripts in the 'set two' and 'set three' mentioned above. (The story has been written up in *Twice-Australia* 18.8.88.)

I have recently returned from two weeks in Canberra, with a weekend 'lightning trip' to the New South Wales archives, and in that time I have called in more than 300 files, and have inspected more than 95 film scripts or detailed synopses, comprising over 3000 pages and 85 photos or stills, plus at least two pairs of music and lyrics used as theme songs or background music in Australian sound feature films (*Unfinished* and *Phantom Golf*).

Since the existence of these full shooting scripts for stage scripts made and filmed was unknown even a year ago this is indeed a remarkable cultural windfall.

There are full scripts of at least two Longford-Lyell films, one of which no longer exists: *The Drinkin' Blinder* and *The African Safari*. The latter is being reconstructed by Marilyn Crookley at the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) and the script will be a great help in her work. There are also other Longford

associated scripts, including *Poker a Ghost* and *The Man They Could Not Hang*. Now we can also have the library of manuscript scripts written by Longford and Lyell in the mid-thirties that were never made into films, like *Song Of Australia*. From these signed scripts we can start to pull to rest the myth that seems to have been built up recently that Louis Lyell did all the work on Longford's films.

There are sets of film scripts that make up a body of work in themselves, and the existence of this material is likely to pump up the reputation of lesser (and perhaps thereby) producers like Arthur C. Trimble, purely from the discovery of so many of his scripts. There were 12 pages of a detailed script for his *The Solar Eclipse of 1922 or Astroscopic and Abominable*.

This is the case also with the quite unique *The Life Story Of John Lee — The Man They Could Not Hang*, which has quite a few different versions registered, in different states at different times. It always puzzled me why this film was such a runaway box office success in the 1930s and I can only assume that because of their content post-Australians had a morbid interest in capital punishment. Mainly because it was such a messy question it was re-written and re-copied a number of times. It would probably take a PhD thesis to disentangle the authorship claims. The same thing happened with *The Martyrdom of Nurse Cavell*, and this is just one more example of the lengthy saga of litigation and one-upmanship as people tried to get credit for their copy-righting material first.

The number of scripts emanating from Melbourne seems to go part of the way towards correcting the traditional picture of Sydney as the dominant filmmaking capital of Australia in the silent era. The whole archive collection shows the close or sometimes confusing connections between stage and screen in Australia, an interface which is yet to be fully documented.

In other words, a lot of these books can now be written about individual films and individual filmmakers like Longford, Benoit, Berles, Swiftwell, Trimble, Shirley, Chabouel, etc. Critical appraisals can now be written about themes in Australian films such as the outback, war, racism, etc. A whole book could be devoted to film scripts that were never completed and possible reasons why. We can look more deeply into behind the scenes activity that went into World War Two propaganda films like those made by Consensus, and also *Walt's Chivalraders*. Individual energies like Shirley and Higgins: *The Accorbirds* are now open for investigation into their content, and why production ceased. Most of all, by inventing the whole spectrum of film scripts held in the archive, from 1900 to when holdings ceased in 1969, we can form a detailed overview of just what were the preoccupations, hopes and fears of Australian filmmakers in the first half of

the 20th century. To project we intended with our book *Australian Film*.

Another feature of this material which ought to be of lesser significance, compared to the excitement of locating the actual scripts and synopses themselves, is important nevertheless. These copyright documents yield a wealth of indirect (yet all) information about the filmmakers themselves.

Nor should the importance of stills in the written and written be underestimated in many important discoveries are due to come to light when the archive staff finish logging and clearing photographic material. They are keen to do this because of the impending bicentennial celebrations, but there are also other reasons for their haste. In both Sydney and Canberra I came across highly inflammable nitrate film that probably had not seen the light of day in 50 years. I called the attention of staff to its existence and it was speedily removed. I shudder to think of any other specimens, similarly entombed in a grove of paper that could burst into flame spontaneously at any time.

Besides the risk of fire from any old nitrate negatives, still locked away, there is a further conservation priority in the need to re-copy any old negatives and even some of the positives, before they fade or suffer away even further, leaving positively with blurry grey prints of stills instead of crisp originals.

Taken together, the scripts and synopses prepared for censorship purposes in the NSW Archives lend to a larger extent in the Victorian State Archives (which is another story) and the copyright submissions of scripts preserved in the Australian Archive offer the student of Australian film history a rich primary source for the last time. Now instead of delving through newspaper reports of screenings, or a fast-gubbing way as we had to do in the past, students can call up copies of three-day scenarios and make close critical comparisons between film and script where films still exist, and where they don't remain. We can gain an idea of what the intended film would have been like. We can go even further and gather up a collection of Australian film scripts that ended up in the rubbish bin of history and were never made. Such were the scripts I looked at, like the story by Agnes Casan or Chabouel's *The Man From Down Under*, that never made it to the screen in their original entirety. By examining these scripts we can gain some insights into the preoccupations of filmmakers of bygone eras, and judge why some were made into films and others weren't.

What we have at the NFSA is really only the tip of the creative iceberg in comparison to what still remains below the surface. With the *Last Film Search* out of the way for the time being, given the certainty that most of the pre-1930 Australian films we are ever going to get have probably already surfaced, the next big frontier in Australian film research may well be these scenarios.

THE POST-MODERNIST ALWAYS RINGS TWICE

Did they come to bury film theory or to praise it? **ADRIAN MARTIN** and **BARBARA CREED** present two very different views of the last Australian Screen Studies Association conference.

Screen studies, or What do we do with the dead body?

A D R I A N M A R T I N

As the 1986 Australian Screen Studies Association (ASSA) conference, held at the New South Wales Institute of Technology (NSWIT) jiggled over into 1987, its participants, in the main, were still wondering what to do with the 1970s. Perhaps one of the central conference themes, *Film Theory Reconsidered* — was — let's put this in a classically Freudian frame: since good old Freud was one of the unexpected hot stars of the occasion — in the sphere of 'inspiring' work — putting the dead to rest, a necessary time of grief. If only that were the case, for it's still (in 1987) with a night mare of the return-of-the-repressed variety: the dead body just keeps heaving around, sticking its high heels in. Come to think of it, wasn't that the *Trouble with Henry*? It's certainly the trouble with screen studies in Australia.

If we can no longer live with the decade, it also seems that we cannot live without it — its memory and its legacy. The reasons are simple: in the seventies — in those great days of *Screen and Camera Culture* renaissance at the already but straightly conglomerate of marriage seminars, seminars-psychiatrists (yes, you've probably heard this story before) — screen studies (film first, then interestingly) crossed as way into institutional respectability. It became a pedagogy. Before that, it was made up of an assemblage of film texts and responses. But in the seventies it became all at once a political position (the knowledge is subversive), a programme of developing research practice (the early Berliners before you move on to the mid- and late-periods, ladies!) and a ticket to avoid gender difference (I've seen the new *Chantal Akerman* how about you?). As an intellectual discipline, the newly baptised brand 'film theory' was — and who really needs to be told this in 1987? — necessarily reductive (looking 'writer' right), it pulped films (not many) into neat illustrations of theoretical concepts (such that the sight of Norman Bates in the populace in *Psycho* reveals that all Classical Narrative Pulpified Hollywood cinema was anyway pure: televisual and patriarchal). And it was a big deal to wave at that conclusion, if you were an obedient student or dutiful teacher — once upon a time. Don't get me wrong: I loved the seventies too, and I've got they heaped. But.

About 10 years ago, the good north-southern trip of film theory started turning to cynicism. It took about five years (beginning at or around 1982, for some people to be able to say 'hey, as theory this stuff has massive problems: and as film theory it doesn't measure up to the pleasures and reflex of particular films. OK, enough said') in which not,

because two ASSA conferences (1984 and 1986) on 'freedom' are still coming out of the closet to exorcise from their tortured souls the demon of seventies film theory. For the nagging problem is this: once you wipe the seventies slate, you've basically got to have scratching up your palms to replace it. Something vital, complex and playful.

This is precisely what we have not seen — not in this country anyway, nor in some of the once great overseas film journals (Screen has been on a dismal confused slide since the early eighties and *Framework* is fast going it on the downhill run). But the teachers still have to teach something, the students still want to believe they're on top of the scene, and the pages of scholarly and popular journals still have to be filled. So we keep stepping up onto the Last Pews for the seventies: under the cool pedagogic guise of 'reconsideration'. But where does it all get us? Try contemplating whether nothingness fits void.

The 1986T conference was a comparatively smoothly run, well organised affair (to once, the eve was guests (from America: Dana Polan and Mary Ann Doane) were made to earn their place long and participate in the life of the event). The form of the conference was less, the inevitable, undesirable problem was in the content.

Dana Polan entered into the context of our local past seventeen materialist concerns, in a strangely happy tangent. For her, the case of classic film theory has well and truly passed, and we have begun an intellectually engaged period when new and exciting movies are entirely possible. If 'good movies' are, as a term or a practice, less any longer, 'inspiring' what (and we'll return to this). Polan was on hand to moderate in the taped rock video talk to Jerry Lewis, and Jean-François Lyotard (back to Walter Benjamin) all in the name of clearing out new paths for research. We need more cool cats like Polan on the scene. But was anybody in the audience really listening?

I forget his hands were elsewhere, locked and aching. Mary Ann Doane (not much to speed, clipped and busy) still talking in the circle of classic/seventies film theory, particularly of the psychoanalytic variety (Freud plus Jacques Lacan). She approaches the dead end drive-in approach to the problem of speaking film into in the eighties: she collects the old pink clearly scored for, and tried that by rereading the little pieces or that she is actually changing the rules of her surroundings (she's not alone, wave to Peter Wollen and Laura Mulvey, Stephen Heath, Paul Williams...). Thus we get on to so slightly reimagined psychoanalytic model in which a howling band of 'fantasy and desire' is suddenly, inactively played in place of the old determined spot concerning the cinematic apparatus.

But what Doane, addressing us from her cell book, cannot help us to the embarrassing poverty of her actual film analysis (she gets down to cases). It's the same old trick of classical vs. avant-garde cinema: Max Ophüls' *La Signora* at Felt impresses (the image of) women while Sally

▶ *Peter's* *The Godfather* *Memories* II. If only *Spore* could have been present at Australian film festivals of 1984 to hear the panel hosing with which the film *Spore's* important promise greeted Peter's film *On with*.

Without wanting to sound reactionary, it has to be said that the feminist intervention in screen studies seems, as of the moment, to be proceeding rather antithetically, where once it was so vital. The panel on feminism and film theory was surely the most debilitated session of the entire conference. The available options were (1) tooting from *Let Us Quene* an extremely technical academic paper on the psychoanalytic definition of fantasy (as more time) spiced with an extremely bare treatment of George Cukor's male and feminized Sylvia Scarlett from *Down*, another call to (re)normalize the *quene*, the subject of *Scarlett* and *quene* (as what else is new?) and from *Laura Jayaraman*, a seriously theoretical graduate born of a typically post-feminist disavowment, also took leave from the theoretical agenda to discuss an early student film made by a man. Her contribution was certainly the most confident and striking, and yet, in a context where it stood as the only example of a more decent fragment of practical film criticism, it came to carry too much weight and significance. The possible future directions for feminist film study were nowhere represented on this panel, or at the conference as a whole.

Let's return to our strange new friend post-modernism. Inayat as Barbara Greed in her paper, *From Hero to Modernity* was inclined to get post-modernism on the opposition to the weary, if limited film theory, my verdict would be that post-modernism is making things down. Greed's paper was a curious example of Foucaultian strategy taken to ludicrous extremes in the name of battle strategy. For if in the Foucault scenario the male child is plunged into civilization society at the age or imagined sight of the mother's genitals (as is still with us?), why don't we say that post-modernism is male and that it (he) loses/disavows the body of feminized theory? And furthermore that, insofar as post-modernism is not is meant to be motivated by its lack for quotation and repetition, it (he) is obviously going for the lost body of the mother? And that if Jean François Lyotard (author of *The Post-Modern Condition*) comes on about the (un)representable, he must have a problem with women's genitals??? Certainly, both the man and the woman in the audience who have been actively engaged in trying to sort out the question of what the post-modern might allow us fruitfully to discuss seemed reasonably shocked, if not downright appalled, at Greed's propositions.

Actually, if it's post-modernism which poses the real threat to screen studies, although this has nothing to do with citation anxiety, The flip side to Peter's experimental optimism is that it seems to leave many of us practitioners in the screen studies field positively in the lurch, panicked off — for the in the strict sense, some hardly to make much anyone. In the wonderful panel on post-modernism (featuring Helen Hengstenberg Morris and Ross Gibson), if particular films were mentioned at all, they were used as suggestive pretexts, necessary points of departure — into the broader culture, the intellectual climate, red history. Our hell to swallow shit's pride (and love) and admit that a word when the last work a long time, even if film has a much integrity to do with it. At least it's better than listening to the absurd, ahistorical problematization of the seventeen theoretical baggage?

And the rest? Screen studies in this country today is a completely fragmented and preoccupied field of endeavour — looked up in this students-only course here or their friendly little magazine there. People gather along with their own work and fruitfully practice the goals a public. If you see the film package you might see something that excites you whilst the droid. I most especially drawn to Ross Harley and Stuart Cunningham's remarkable presentation on Godard's *Mais l'Amour* which truly had the courage of its connection to try something that theoretically was beyond the limits of the seventies agenda, and was also a damn fine piece of practical film analysis. The ultimate religious conservatism of their position (a sophisticated conservatism) which, that of Godard's film, both a hundred specific like me, but the magnitude of the paper's achievement cannot be downplayed.

There was praise for Eric Michaels' paper on Aboriginal television, and Felicity Collins' treatment of Laura Jayaraman's *A Song Of Ogilby*. Helen Greed's wonderful paper on the representations of masculinity and femininity within sport and its surrounding discourse was another sign that the best work happening under the screen studies umbrella has displaced film-as-privileged-object altogether.

Ah, but what of television studies. I hear you ask. I must confess to not

yet having been seduced by the burgeoning work in this area. TV studies has in fact become the new and successful academic pedagogy for the eighties. Strangely, it rides on a reputation of having burst through the chains of film theory. But the field has not elaborated its own methodology, the same flight of fancy (and once again, on the "bare truth" of rock video and soap opera, as the same ideological set-taking over the respectable construction of news and current affairs shows. Jane Fols provided a predictably professional, pug-nut presentation from the frontlines of this new orthodoxy on the TV text as polysemous, open to massive consumer re-writing, and integral to subcultural subversion. But at best, at the conference, its initially attractive solid merit its match.

Tim Rowse's casual and brilliantly argued critical response to Fols targeted the dangerous fantasy involved in it — the fantasy of anti-politicizing media consumption in the degree that it takes on the aura of a fully conscious revolutionary act. When questioned on this point, Fols drew around herself the protection of a pedagogical boundary, "Yes, this isn't ideology, it's cultural studies. Yet it's precisely that kind of intellectual experience, that refusal to think through the links in global relations evoked in the post-modern panel, that makes the unrepresentability of current analysis of TV. So — sorry, wrong out. The way out of our current miseries is not to be found here.

I remember, in a young lad, attending the first of what has turned out to be many screen-studies-related conferences, I showed up fairly excited by to hear speeches and audiences bounce off the most exciting under-exploring things happening right then down the road at the local cinema complex. Surely this must be what teaching, writing, discussing film is all about — consistent vigilance on the present, a both serious and playful consideration of images around, on film (and now, film on video). Years later, I am exposed to the truth: that conferences are generally about five or 10 years behind the moment (just) is the inevitable condition of academia), and never have a finger on the vital pulse of the messy present.

But still, I can't help looking out the window, away from another session of good speeches still shock, to ponder at the violence of *Moist* *Moist*, the joy of *Forrest Gump's* *Day Off*, the politics of *Working Class Man*, or the politics of *The Fly*. And then I realize that the cinema is elsewhere, it has been the deep leaving me with a dead body I don't want! (the severed) and a mutant body I can't quite yet recognize (post-modernism). That's it, at right screen studies in Australia is grounded, and it needs to find some new ways to fly.

Feminist film theory, or The incredible shrinking woman

BARBARA GREED

In her keynote address, "Remembering Women: Physical and Historical Contributions to Film Theory", Mary Ann Doane, the visiting professor from Brown University, Rhode Island, somewhat pointed out that the term "remembering" was not hyphenated and thus not intended to refer to a masculinization or phallization of women. Little did she realize that the use of "remembering" women means something quite specific in an Australian context where feminist film theory — now that it has taken — appears to have become everybody's baby! I did not seem to realize that Doane's paper actually addressed the current impasse in which feminist theory — and theory in general — finds itself. The Great Australian Knowledge (male and female) anxious not to let down the side, left muttering like baudhianian prophets of doom about the "end of film theory" — and the failure of feminism to address its own problems. One speaker even went so far as to lay virtually all the failures of seventies theory (as well as its few — and suspect) at the door of feminism while hoping back to some distant past when there was men and theory was theory. It is this attitude (criticized by some — not all) that I find most curious.

It would appear that now it is no longer fashionable to be interested in feminism which is seen, in some quarters, as either all-out-of-date or as part of the mainstream. Rather than acknowledging that all theory is currently at an impasse or working creatively in an endeavour to find new discourses, some are keen to bury feminism as quickly as possible. Why? What do they have at stake? A desire to be seen as "not yet there", but ahead

HERE COME THE INDIANS

South America has become a new stamping ground for filmmakers, and South American Indians a new breed of extra, in settings which range from the 18th century to the present. Historian STEPHEN NIBLO examines three recent examples.

Recently we have been treated to a series of films dealing quite seriously with one of the great themes of modern history: the expansion of European civilization at the expense of traditional societies. Whether content with mindless escapism or satisfied merely to manipulate images, *The Mission*, *Imperial Force* and *Amazon Quest* attempt to deal with the great historical theme of political and cultural expansion in such case millions of dollars were spent in order to locate the films in different regions of South America and attempt what was regarded to capture something of the ethnographic reality of the people and the geography of the place. Treating historical content with cheap thrills, these films strike an approach that takes content seriously.

No longer are the native people simple victims who deserve whatever measure of sympathy the local community are sure to dole upon them. Two of the three films, *The Mission* and *Imperial Force*, try to recreate something of the world view and the ambience of the native people who woke up to the arrival of the Europeans. They do not treat western expansion as a lesser pattern. David Paterson and John Goodman are acutely aware of the demographic catastrophe that western expansion implies for native people. Films build enough to venture into this field are breaking on territory themes in modern history. Moreover, although all of the writers and producers of these films appear to be at least of it, they now form a virtual addition to a long series of attempts by European to celebrate, ignore or lament the strength of European civilisations were native civilisations and the eradication of native peoples.

The Mission is set in the Jesuit missions in Paraguay some 20 years before the expulsion of the Indians from the Spanish Empire in 1767 and only a few years before they were expelled from Portugal in 1755. It presents a world in which the Jesuit missionaries sought to protect the Guarani Indians against the Spanish and Portuguese settlers. The benevolence of the missions created an island in which Indians learned and were prospered. That was in marked contrast to conditions outside of the Jesuit lands. Slavery



AMAZON, BUT TRUE: Journey from brings ice and trouble in *Mission* (top)
UTOPIA, ANYONE? Harrison Ford leads his tribe in *The Mission* (middle)
WILD CHILD: *Imperial Force*'s noble Amazon, Charley Hootman (right)



erected formally in Portugal's colony and functionally in the Spanish colonies. Slavers hunted the Indians to sell them into bondage to the settlers. European military technology guaranteed victory to the interlopers, even the Spaniards' dogs were not poor, but vicious animals trained to run down native peoples. As the twin disasters of disease and forced labour consumed the native peoples, perished by the millions.

The political context of *The Mission* is fascinating and broadly accurate. The Jesuit order was in trouble in Catholic Europe since, as the soldiers of the Papacy were seen as a threat to the growth of the nation state, as well as the national hierarchy of the Church in each country. Unlike all other orders, their loyalties were to Rome, rather than Madrid or Lisbon. Within the Portuguese sphere the Marquis of Pombal — the Enlightenment minister of King João I, 1750-77 — had the Jesuits targeted. They were expelled, first totally and above all too independent Charles III in Spain viewed the order as much the same way. So a serial representative of the General of the Society of Jesus was sent out to close the Jesuit mission in order to try to save the order back in Europe. Mission Indians and missionaries notwithstanding, the high politics of the day meant that Christian values and church were doomed in the face of the settler's greed for land and Indian labour.

The Church was, then as now, deeply divided over the issue of whether Christian values should apply to powerful Christians. Terrible brutality was perpetrated upon native peoples in the name of progress and Christian civilisation. The ministers of *The Mission* had that point right. They also understood the broad politics of the day as settlers clashed with those within the tradition of *Reforma de las Costas*, the Dominican adviser to the Emperor Charles V, who sought to protect the American Indians. It is impressive to find filmmakers who appear to have studied their history.

There are problems that are could care in *The Mission*. In the desire to portray the brutality of the settlers and the colonists, there is a fairly romantic re-invention of the Indians. Pulling back upon the literary device of the noble savage, the film postulates a golden age. The

Indians are presented rather more as an adjunct of the European than autonomous individuals. Certainly we learn little of the lives of the Indians in the novel version of the film by Masson's screenwriter Robert Roth: there is a conflict between the desire to resist the Euro-peans and the temptation to accommodate them within the Indian camp. Unfortunately that does not happen in the film. The best Indians seem to be those who most skillfully adapt to European ways, some even learn to perform classical music.

A close criticism of the film could also focus upon the nature of the jewel mine. It was not set up in the 17th century, they were not there for a century and a half and they contained hardly a quarter of a million Indians. They were not run as Christian communities, as The Mission would have it, but as efficient plantations. But three objections are trivial. If the authors had changed the venue from the jewel mine in Paraguay to the last Caran missions in Central America it would have been quite accurate.

The great achievement of *The Mission* is in introducing the high politics of the day with the immediate situation of the priests, the colonists and the Caran officials. Even though the Indians' model was a left winged theory they are portrayed with a sense of humanity and human feelings. On the test of their humanity they rate higher than their masters. When we recall that a funded mission European justification for the destruction of the Indians was that they were savages. Patterns and jobs at it all have gone very far indeed.

By contrast Peter Weir's new film *Mission: Impossible* is an exercise of historical sophistication. Based upon the novel by Paul Theroux, it is located in the present and it focuses on an inventor who became alienated by the barren nature of US prosperity. After played by Harrison Ford, transplants his family to the coast of Central America in order to build his world anew. Like the advanced aspects of European culture before him, Allen uses technology to prevail over the people who were already there.

Allen builds an ingenious machine that makes use of fire. With a missionary's and he takes on to a remote tribe of Indians in the jungle. He eventually leads the Indians and successfully battles being off the tribe. His invention only serves to attract the barons to his Utopia. The closest Weir comes to making a comment on Latin American reality is a statement that anyone with "an ounce of ambition . . . need not accept repression. Allen kills the invading barons by trapping them in, and then destroying, the art works as well as the community reality in the process he pollutes his tower irrevocably.

The most striking aspect of *Mission: Impossible* is the concept imposed by the native people. The most attractive figure in the film is a black Indian doctor named Mr. Haddy in the process of killing the barons. Allen also destroys Haddy's boat, without any understanding of what it represents to him. The arrogance of the wealthy world in dealing with the poor world is boundless. Later there is a poignant scene in which Conrad

Robert, as Mr. Haddy, offers help and Allen rejects it with contempt for Haddy and the natives.

The theme that links *Mission: Impossible* to the other films under consideration is the use of technology as the key to progress. Much to his mortification, Allen is not the only missionary on the *Mission: Impossible*. In direct conflict and competition with Allen's technological mission is one Kenneth Spellgood. A product of Cold War Christianity, he is grotesquely transplanted from the US Middle East. It is not surprising that the two missionaries clashed. When Allen flees upriver after a death decision the second and continues to be created — he had arrogantly ignored Haddy's warning that he was building too close to the water — he comes across a remote jungle church with Spellgood preaching on videotape to the natives. The application of high technology to little building villages here and the fact that his nation went over to Spellgood is too much to bear.

At the family level Allen runs his Utopia as a paternal dictatorship. He bullies and terrorizes his children and his wife a curious character without a name (he is simply referred to as "mother" throughout the film) it isn't that Helen Marlow as the wife is an anti feminist. She simply appears not to have heard that there has been a revolution of ideas over the role of women in modern society over the past quarter century. Only when Allen is more conscious and in his death throes does "mother" work up the courage to destroy his institutions and turn the launch downriver away from his dream of a jungle Utopia. Allen's vision of progress has considerably less staying power than that of the Europeans who came to South America before him.

Peter Weir has located his film on Central America in the age of President Reagan without reference to the US legacy in the region the war that are presently raging nearby or even the Mosquito Indians who have certainly come to prominence. Yet in a second scene of US imperialism the film inadvertently touches the link between technology and imperialism in its many varied forms. The romantic urge to drop out and find an unspoiled area in which to create a technological Utopia the film is presented as a new version of *Seven Years in the Trenches* emerges reality with and presents a case for current backlash of public opinion.

Imperial Forest is, by contrast, extremely sensitive to the indigenous population. It is a tendering but politically flawed film in which some subtle early ethnography is followed by a series of romantic elements to unbelievable as to make all but the most incredulous viewer recoil. That it is a shame waste in many ways it was the most ambitious of these films. *Imperial Forest* does attempt to understand the world view of the Indians.

The film is based upon an incident in which an Amazonian Indian tribe kidnapped the young son of an engineer working on one of those massive hydroelectric projects so favoured by the Brazilian military. The history of European expansion is depicted with the

device of the lost child, from Rome/Julius and Rome to Taran. The filmmakers avoid the usual in nature controversy and turn the film into a reflection on contemporary society.

The engineer, Markham, eventually finds his son, being the life of a tribal Indian. He explains the Indian "father" of the now 12-year-old young man, and asks why they kidnapped his child. The Indian says that when his people saw the boy smile at them, their hearts softened, and they decided to save him from a life with the Tarnite People in the Great World. (These natives of the Amazon have watched as the 20th century problem of progress have decimated the rainforest the Indians named our world the "Great World" and they call us the Tarnite People because we bore away an ancient land, destroying them. It is a poignant encounter as is the excellent scene in which the young boy goes through the rites of passage into manhood. There is also a clever use of symbolism to allow the Indians to speak their own language and then blend in English so that the audience can avoid reading subtitles. After all, in his book on the making of the film, John Boorman estimates that 25% of his audience will be so functionally illiterate that they will have trouble reading subtitles.)

After a good start, including a generous treatment of the original father's realization that his son should stay on the forest, the film is badly derided. Local slave traders and the village and drag the young woman away to be sold into slavery at the local brothel.

Valid up to that point, the film then falls apart. It reverts to pre-worked devices, including a shootout at the GK brothel. The ethnographic scenes degenerate into a drug scene in which the Indians on a trip convinced an eagle to have him bring on the rain in order to destroy a dam. It has a happy ending, secure in simple notions of good Indians and bad Indians and the possibility of avoiding the destruction of the rain forests of the Amazon basin.

These films are important in that they address the ongoing relationship between western expansion and native peoples. Since films deal with values in important, if fairly unimportant ways, it is encouraging to find in at least two of these three films a concern for indigenous people. Yet *Imperial Forest* and John Boorman are better at establishing impressive physical settings in their films than in exploring the world views of different cultures. Peter Weir inadvertently explores the appalling inequality of those who possess more advanced technology.

Films that purport to deal with other times and other cultures frequently fall into the trap of merely dressing their characters in other costumes but still dealing with us, now. At least we have in these films some degree of sympathy misplaced for the victims of progress, even if there is only a partial recognition that indigenous people have the right to a material basis for their survival. We still have, however, a long way to go before there is a general understanding that other cultures have world views that are also worth exploring.



Simon Gung, Justine Saunders, Kath Walker (left to right)

TWO WEEKS OF HOPE

Aboriginal writers and actors want the chance to write their own stories. RICHARD GUTHRIE reports.

Like Chekhov, Aboriginal writers are witnessing the end of an era, but unlike most Chekhovian characters in rural Russia, Aboriginal people are finding a way out of their urban wilderness. They have renewed hope, hope for a place, hope to be heard.

Brian Syron was reflecting on two weeks of an emotionally and spiritually charged conference and workshop. He had seen new writing emerging, new directing talent demonstrating its force, and young actors effortlessly command the stage. For Syron, who had not to be emotional in the face of a released dream.

It was back in 1973, just shortly after he had returned from 10 years' study and work that Brian had first tried to form a national black theatre. Now 14 years later, after 10 years had been added by public experience and government indifference, the dream had begun to take shape.

Syron had helped publish the first Aboriginal play, *The Cherry Pickers*, it was written by Kevin Gilbert on prison toilet paper, and smuggled out with the help of Marion St John Baker. "She was an abolitionist, a woman committed to social justice." She has since died, but Kevin Gilbert was present at the workshop sitting quietly but burning with a poet's indignation at outlining *Parangarri*, the Chikan poet Pablo Neruda. Gilbert spoke of the ingrained pain and loss of the last 200 years of Australian history. You ask me why I don't write of birds, trees, the perfumed flowers. Come and see the blood in the sheets, come and see the blood in the streets." Gilbert noted that while Aboriginal theatre was born and nurtured around informal camp fires, the Aboriginal written word was only in its infancy. Look, we have here the first published Aboriginal poet (Kath Walker), the first Aboriginal novelist (Colin Johnson) and myself. That's how short our written history is."

With Kath Walker and Jack

David Kevin Gilbert forms an old guard of writers that presence was revered by all. In the acting contingent, it was the token example of pioneers Justine Saunders and Bob Maza which inspired the new rising talent.

Actors fresh from recent films like *The Fringe Dwellers*, *Short Chopped*, and *Backlash* — actors such as David Kennedy, Simon Gung, Lydia Miller and Kristina Nohm — all led the strength of Kath Walker. She coaxed, lectured, commented and teased; her voice rich with stories, images and experience. She recalled the days in the office and scenes when whose refused to believe that Aboriginals could write. Together she and Jack Davis expressed their joy and wonder at all the new young talent they saw.

But there were no stars, a collective spirit grew on the first day and it remained throughout the conference. Up at dawn working till 10pm, then singing and sharing stories until the early hours. The plays and film scripts they worked on dealt with themes of culture and personal loss, the tragedy of family separation, the crumbling of values and law. On the top night the first black theatre ceremony for stage and screen was held.

Short Chopped picked up three awards: best actor (David Kennedy), best supporting actor (James Agnew) and best film or television screenplay (Robert Merritt). Justine Saunders won best actress for her role in *The Fringe Dwellers* and Lydia Miller won best supporting actress for *Backlash*.

Jack Davis summed up the euphoria and hope of the occasion: "I didn't think it was going to happen in my lifetime, I thought it was an impossibility, but nothing is impossible for Aboriginal people. We're creative people and because we've been downgraded for so long, we've also got the gift of the gab and better, can we use our tongue as well as our pen, we certainly can."



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R·E·V·I·E·W·S

- The Assam Garden
- Australian Dream
- Betty Blue
- Blue Velvet
- The Color Of Money
- Crimes Of The Heart
- Deadly Friend
- Death Of A Soldier
- Dogs In Space
- The Fly
- Heartbreak Ridge
- Heartburn
- The Name Of The Rose
- 'Round Midnight
- Sid And Nancy
- Soul Man
- Yellow Earth

• DOGS IN SPACE

*"... Every period of history has its pariahs — people who have had the gross terror of existence projected on to them. In the middle ages it was witches; for the past hundred years it's been lepers; and now we have drug addicts." (Burt Yelting, director of *Pure Sin*, interviewed in *Cinema Papers* April 1977)*

Two years after *Pure Sin* the pariahs are still around, but instead of a megalo, one-track mind, marauding gang of junkies, *Dogs In Space* launches us to present times New Wave 1979, and although the two films aren't that far apart in time now, they're even apart in vision.

Pure Sin, an nightmarish observation and intensely harrowing tour from one nerve to the next with an unflinching gaze at its characters, attempted to advertise itself with a poster that included the words "Heroin — it's better than dying." (The poster was banned.) Unlike *Dogs In Space* where death signals the end of the party, the end of an era and a return to the pursuit of middle class security, *Pure Sin* disregarded death as part of the game and revealed one of the most chilling aspects of heroin — that it is bigger than life and death. In the adventure, drugs were an experience to be reckoned with, but in the nighties, they are an amen, a near Whole! I don't wish to focus on drugs as a method of numbing the face of the drug addict (in *Dogs In Space*) is fairly undignified, shallow, coarse, non-acknowledging loss of identity. Of course substance abusers for "junk" and we are dealing with a subculture, which proves to be a difficult and unyielding volunteer for the cinema which ignored it all those years ago, and now wishes to exploit its misery and failure to deliver the promised revolution. Generally, films about that era (even those marketed into the future like *Liquid Sky*) follow an unvarnished formula: maximum crowd scenes (the concept of the "herd"), moderate use of the music and live bands which inspire the youth into varying acts of violence and suicide, a religious ecstasy involving drugs, and maximum insight into the individual.

Dogs In Space inspires themselves to this formula but fails to perfect it, even as a literary. Richard Lowenstein has made a film so marinated in contrary modes of production that he has lost the grasp on the original atmosphere. The film desperately tries to recreate and has given way to cliché and tokenism. Its major inconsistencies of style are visible in the first scene at the Borneo concert where there is an almost documentary bias into the past, interrupted by the

grand entrance of the car of skinheads, the camera moving to ground level to glimpse the ugly yet historic platform shoe — the first of many symbols Lowenstein uses to classify his characters, rather than concentrate on personalities.

The action in the film is limited to making the decadent hobbies of the punk household and their quasi-connections with members of "order" ideological persuasions. The film confusedly splits itself between anti narrative and narrative, a mosaic of cinema vérité and video clip images (visually reminiscent of the post-apocalyptic INCEP video) and the use of non professional and professional actors. This last division is one of the film's greatest weaknesses. Lowenstein's direction never blinds the eye, it simply reinforces the impression that the cast is made up of casters versus people who have had enough experience. Yet the film is undoubtedly saved by Andrew de Green's wonderful camera, gliding through crowds, capturing faces, and placing eyecontact in each minute event, you really feel like you are there. The characters however — going to one's own and never really allowed beyond their functions of cinema supports or party ragers (and literally indulging in drugs or rape) — only work when they break out of their moulds. Luther's long last line, Lesauve (Sharon Jensen), brilliantly bears everybody in this game when the screams in front of the red (unmarked) punk set, "How do you know when you've had a good time?" When you throw your knuckers at the wall and they suck? Peter Walsh (Tory, the calm, always neutral, sensitive lapped) and Nique Noodle (Tim, the alien whose lack of cool gets him thrown out of the band) are good performers, and define the blow for the radicals and political ideologues who've obviously missed the bus but are made to look all the more ridiculous for it.

Michael Ruckhouse is not exploited for his gift of glamour, and his character, largely incapable of coherent speech, is a vicious attack on punk's prohibition for narcissism and own publicity, so his role is nothing more than grand urge for art and momentary revelation into childlike. Sam's sexuality and total lack of a cage — when a representative for Rock Against Racism calls to get the band involved, he only answers as how much money is in it — confirms his, duty in the bourgeois pursuit of a career. Here Lowenstein throws out or reduces to acknowledge any effort at subversion the punk in the film make. The litigat takes over and struggle is strimmed at

drugs, money and their anxious are magically supplied, with little interaction with the outside world.

In *Days* nobody is exempt from Lowenstein's sour insight into the alternative scene, with the exception of Aerie, who seems to move as a guiding light of youth attuned by politics, taste or unseeable behavior. Like the rest of them, she comes from the suburbs and retains all the mannerisms necessary for the presence of punk culture, but is the only one who is opinionless, she looks and acts dreamt of a respectable career is dedicated to her men, curls, disgusted by his sexual behavior. There is the fierce course of things the man did, and by the hand that cuts away but keeps in motion her pores. Her death is, however, too romantic, as the reality on her way to heaven in a first class ticket, her melody, until her lover suddenly cleansed and on top of the ladder of success. This is the cue, for the film dismally to turn its back and, for the last previous moment, solve any moral problems by turning into a video clip. The car glides into special effects land

there is a brief scene in the rear with a destroyed Sam and friends (who know now that show's over), a cheap grin forced some, then the big finale and his song, any hint of "social realism" is rendered in the sense of nostalgia. The end is not surprising but disappointing as it charts up any problems that could have been pursued in the film about the fate of the indie world in the future as a swamp of commercialism and hard money. This is *Days In Spain*'s sides punch, however, and is the character of the rock scene, coupled with the "true story" appeal that will prove as endurance and success.

FILM BY

1998, IN SPACE. Directed by Patrick Lowenstein. Producer: Geoff Rowe. Executive producer: Robert Le Taland. Screenplay: Executive: a change of production: John Kennedy. Screenplay: Patrick Lowenstein. Director of photography: Andrew de Groot. Art director: Judy Baskin. Musical director: Glen Elton. Cast: Al Bano, Glen Elton, Stephen King, Susan Paul, Peter, Nigel, Michael (Tim), Dennis, Boris (The Dog), Tony, Helen, Judith, Chris, Raymond, Chris, Joe, Marc, Peter, Peter, Anthony, Laura, Benjamin, Chris, Adam, Michael, Peter, David, Joseph, James. Production company: Central Park. Film: 100 min. Music: David Byrne and Robert Plant. Screen: 85 minutes. Rating: R. 1998.

• SID AND NANCY

The release of *Sid And Nancy* coincides with a retrospective of 10-year-old movies in the beginning of punk, as well as a renaissance of questions to do with the representation of recent popular culture. How do you depict a particular historical situation that is so mythologized, documented and idealized that putting it into cinematic form is almost made into a publicly responsible act? Rather the weight of modernity imposes upon the task to such an extent that making a film around the lives of famous punksters becomes a textbook recreation of official New Musical Express or Rough/Parade type accounts, or the artist, because of the pressure and historical accuracy goes out the window. That is, of course, if you accept the grounds upon which historical authenticity and artistic license are polarized. If you don't, then the problems of making one when to think of *Sid And Nancy* becomes slightly more complex.

On the state of modernity, *Sid And Nancy* rates pretty poorly. The casting seems the most in just about every conceivable way, placing stage actors in roles which surely could have been played by the punksters who have a more explicit understanding of their parts. (In this regard, Gas's next project, which combines Harry Dean Stanton, Emilio Ibarra, Joe Strummer, Iggy Pop and Elton Joelle, sounds infinitely more interesting.) David Hayman, as Malcolm McLaren, looks and sounds like Art Garfunkel. Drew Schofield is absolutely unrecognizable as Johnny Rotten, Glenn Webb carries an unimpeachable whangy Nancy while Gary Oldman goes away with playing a blonde, if a little over-the-top. The characters wind their way through a guided tour of the Sex Pistols' England and United States circa 1977/78 — the 100 Club, the Jubilee Day bus tour, the Hackney square, Bill Grundy's *Today* program, Texas real estate, Sid singing *My Way*, completely out-of-a-punk scenes in CINEC, The Chelsea Hotel, the look, the clothes, the end — without most regard for the detail or ordering of events.

In itself this irreverence is no shame, and after all it is the self-destructive love story that emerges between Sid and Nancy which is the subject of the film, not documentary accuracy. But in spite of this, it's little surprise that none of the figures portrayed in *Sid And Nancy* have given their approval so this film version of 1977-and-oh-then.

To marry a real *Sid And Nancy* is a



STARE WAR Deanna Fand waits on the steps for Michael Hutchence to come home

OF MONEY

in its execution (its brightly-lit surface) and in the film's moral position.

Some will argue that, as always with Scorsese, there is the theme of redemption. But it goes nowhere near *Raging Bull* or that score for Eddi Felson (it's more like bargain basement redemption). In both films, Scorsese uses pool and boxing as metaphors for the psychic states of his characters. The sequences of boxing and pool shooting have both been called minimalist in style. In one, the extraordinary mounted sequences of La Motta in the ring are counterpoint to their formal dynamism and fully integrated into the thematic fabric of the film. In the other, the pool shooting sequences are often marked by preterbious overkill, and bear a perfunctory relationship to the drama.

It is clear that *The Color of Money* is a Scorsese film gone wrong, and it is also clear where the fault originates. Scorsese and screenwriter Richard Price have misinterpreted Rosen's vision in *The Winner*. In Price's words, this is how he imagined the Felson character 25 years on: "I was interested in Bruce Rattelle's notion of identification with the opponent. You become the thing that you're most terrified of and that makes you most powerful. What makes Fast Eddie Felson most powerful in life? That's the George C. Scott character in the first film, the guy that told him he can't play anymore. As Newman should become, when he reaches that age, George C. Scott—a cynic, a man of pool players, and hate himself and deny all the lawyer and lost for that sport that he had when he was a young man. That's the premise, that he's now the mild backslider who refuses to pick up a pool cue." (*Sight & Sound*, Autumn 1994)

Back in the sixties, in an aptly titled interview 'Lustern Learned in Condon', Rosen stated that most of his characters are 'crippled'. He meant by that that they were morally, psychologically or spiritually crippled, and that the film's narratives were therapeutic journeys. At the end of *The Winner*, Eddi Felson rejects the George C. Scott character and all he stands for, and if that also means never playing pool again, Eddie accepts that willingly. Eddie makes that decision as a 'moral being', seeing through his former powerlessness and corruption at the hands of the Scott character. Scott's power assumes one of physical aggression but not a psychological one. Therefore Eddie can walk out the moral victor, and it is Scott at that moment who is powerless. To bring the Eddie character back 25 years



RIGHT TO CLASH: Tom Cruise, ready to coin Vince

on and cast him in the mould of the Scott character is profoundly to misunderstand the Rosen film. It is illogical, it cannot be sustained, and then throws *The Color of Money* off balance from the start. Having been redeemed once, Eddie is hardly in need of a second redemption. He may be a cynic but he is hardly corrupt in a devastating sense.

As a character study, and that's just dominantly what the film is, it's hollow at the centre. Scorsese's characters need to be obsessive, neurotic, pathological, or just plain loony — think of Johnny Boy, Travis, La Motta or Robert Pupkin. Paul Newman isn't Robert De Niro. That's an important distinction, because Scorsese's visual style is tailored around certain screen performers and personas. Scorsese tries, as often as not, to look us into the vision of his characters, as is the case with the slow motion point-of-view shots in *Raging Bull*. The subjective point-of-view shot is among Scorsese's favourite; the reflexive camera movements duplicate the observational, restless nature of his characters. Eddi Felson, as played by Paul Newman, is Scorsese's best observational character, and it is for that reason I think that the Scorsese style is less on show in *The Color of Money*. It's also the least violent of his films, and I'm not referring to the absence of graphic violence. Together with his longtime editor Thelma Schoonmaker, Scorsese has produced the most innovative editing effects and rhythms to be found in contemporary American cinema. The violence and often unexpected dislocation and displacement of the spectator's field of vision

is the main source of Scorsese's violent imagery, not violence within the image but violence of images in collision. When the field of vision is hard around cinematic observational types like Travis, La Motta or even him in *After Hours*, the nerve editing often works well. Unfortunately the current Eddie Felson doesn't fit into that gallery of Scorsese types. Tom Cruise, on the other hand, does. His is a full out, show-stopping, frenetic performance. Whatever energy the film has commands the Vincent character. When Eddie undergoes his 'crisis of conscience' stage and begins his moral conversion, the film puts the Cruise character and his girlfriend Carmen on hold and subsequently gets lost in tanglewood sentimentality. This is where the film becomes most routine, and none of Scorsese's previous films could be accused of that.

Ironically enough, in America at least, *The Color of Money* represents his biggest box-office success since *Top Gun*. His renewed commercial viability may finally permit him to make *The Last Temptation of Christ*, that long-awaited project. For the moment though, *The Color of Money* is a sad affair.

Robynne Caputo

THE COLOR OF MONEY Directed by Martin Scorsese. Producers: Irving Ashkin and Barbara Da Pin. Associate producer: Dick Foster. Screenplay: Robert Price. Based on the novel by Walter Tevis. Director of photography: Michael Ballhaus. Production designer: Bob Levin. Music: Max Roach/Harold Falicki. Editor: Thelma Schoonmaker. Cast: Paul Newman (Eddie), Tom Cruise (Vincent), Jane Fonda (Marion), Dennis Hopper (Sherry Lansing), Jeff Tatum (Jack), Ed Collen (Shel), David Ayala (Shel), Keith McCubbin (Shel), Scorsese. Production company: Touchstone Pictures. Distributor: Greater Union. Opens 13th March 1995. 1995



GEOMETRY: Dexter Gordon is in-the-pipe or out-to-the-loop

• 'ROUND MIDNIGHT

'Round Midnight is a kind and generous story about the love between people and music. Based on events from the life of musician Lester Young and Bud Powell, and dedicated to them, this obvious labor of love by French director Bertrand Tavernier addresses the lives of musicians with mediating and painful accuracy and reverence, respect, along with the occasional cold stare.

Living legend Dexter Gordon portrays Dale Turner, an American expatriate saxophonist, playing regular gigs at the Blue Note in Paris in the late fifties. The aging sax great creates a large and charming presence as he struts through the movie in his belated past, with a smoky voice that sounds as if he just woke up with sleep thrust. He is watched by a collective of bewhiskered club workers and colleagues, and is denied his pay in cash in payment for not helping in an unusual fight.

The entrance of Francis (Francis Clavier) on the scene introduces a refreshing love relationship from an angle not often addressed in cinema. Based on the character of Francis Fordise, a Parisian who befriended Bud Powell, Francis is a freelance illustrator, 38-ish, abandoned by his wife and

caring for their young daughter single-handedly in a small flat. Francis is down on his luck and in awe of his idol, Dale Turner. We first meet him listening to Turner's music outside the Blue Note in the rain, separated from the real action by his inability to pay. He is frustrated, quick-tempered, and perhaps not the best father in the world.

But when he meets Turner, life begins to change for Francis. In the beginning, he just takes advantage of his openness to buy him drinks, and Turner's friends and band are slow to accept the new comer's constant presence. But Francis creates a real friendship out of one-sided adulation, and draws Turner back to health, as inspiring payback to the musician he respects. Turner moves in with him and his daughter, teenagers, and the relationship that blossoms between fan and star is the real beauty of the film.

'Round Midnight was staged in America as a story about a musician "driving with substance abuse." The objectionable, 1980s TV-movie-of-the-week language is totally inappropriate and does a disservice to the story of Dale Turner. He is a man of the fifties who is both a genius and a drunk, and he lives with the traps of the musician's life, including drugs, alcohol and estrange-

ment from family and country. His "use" comes not from the hapless detoxing and group therapy that modern rock phrases imply, but from human caring and one-to-one healing. Likewise, the man who loves Turner back to health receives regular healing benefits as the process. They are both still far from perfect, though. Turner hasn't a clue about how to love his 16-year-old daughter, whom he has hurt too much to make amends. A song written for her is momentarily inspiring but not what she needs, yet it is all he knows how to give. And Francis, blinded by his desire to serve Turner, is unable to consider the feelings of his ex-wife, whom he cruelly shuns out when she makes an effort to help and understand.

It has been noted that the look of Dexter Gordon is extremely close to that of Dale Turner, which raises the question of whether or not he is really acting. In an interview, Tavernier commented on his choice for the part: "After observing Dexter on film, I couldn't think of any other actor doing the part. Lewis (Wilder) and I had agreed from the beginning that we should have a musician, not an actor playing a musician. Even with Robert De Niro, whom I admire more than any other actor in the world, I could see in every

laughs, but some considerable dramatic weight besides.

Soul Man is quick off the mark. As Mark and friend Gordon Bloomfield (Arpe Gross) intuitively upon their return to see if they've made it to Harvard, the burden of impositions, academic and eventually, financial success (an echo of *Boyz n the Hood*), is clearly in evidence. This is, after all, the decade of the Yuppies, and the rule of Reagan.

The colour issue is handled with as much care that the viewer sensitively tucked up in the US by a small number of critics and black community leaders seems equally unswayed. Watson's character is used effectively as an unambiguous mouthpiece of transcending middle-class bigotry against blacks. Sure, stereotypes are used, but only to focus on the fact that they are stereotypes, sometimes funny, sometimes not.

In an interesting contrast to *Soul Man*, *Jumpin' Jack Flash*, starring Whinge Goldberg, treats colour as irrelevant, with only one fleeting reference being made, the fact that she is a woman is considered more important.

Comedy in the vehicle through which Watson and the audience learn about white (mis)conceptions of blacks. Invited to an all-black meeting, he turns up as a fully armed militant to the theme of *Blat*, only to find a roomful of nervous looking, and surprised, students. The notion of sensitive black brotherhood is imposed when Watson unexpectedly

appeals for some leeway from his John Houseman-like lecturer, played by James Earl Jones. There is also a hilarious basketball sequence where Watson is chosen because he is black, and a marvelous dinner party sequence where a white family sees him as a white lion of black stereotypes from rock star to pimp to rival.

But apart from the function of the film's humour, *Soul Man* is imbued with some effective dramatic elements. The audience begins to sympathise and, more importantly, identify with Watson as his new skin colour attracts bigotry from the police. He also feels increasing attraction at racist jokes made by other students who, upon meeting him, quickly offer "No offence".

The audience's vested interest in the film is compounded by his relationship with a poor single black mother, Sarah Walker (Rae Dawn Chong), who was to get the scholarship before Watson blocked up and applied.

This triggers off an important moral dilemma which seems to develop themes touched on in *Boyz n the Hood*. Whereas *Boyz n the Hood* was a cynical celebration of the moral imprudence committed to achieve the capitalistic goals set by schools, *Soul Man* turns that imprudence back on the perpetrator, making him question his actions, and giving the film's premise an added emotional dimension.

There have been objections that Howell looks like a gollwey and that

this is offensive. Sure, he doesn't look black, but as a comedy, one should be prepared to suspend disbelief for the sake of the worthiness of the film's politics. In any case, it was far preferable to watching from a white to a black actor, or starting off with a whiter-skinned black actor who turns black, which would have been infinitely worse, as was done in the 1983 black comedy *White Man's Burden*.

It's also been said that the film does little more than blatantly restate what people already know, that police treat black people differently to white people, that racist jokes are unfunny, that bigotry exists. Had the film failed, this criticism would have been valid. But because *Soul Man* has been such an unqualified success, and because it addresses its issues with some degree of intelligence, and balances its comedy with considerable dramatic weight, this must surely be a laudatory vindication of the intelligence of the average teenager. Here's hoping, anyway.

Jim Schreiber

SOUL MAN Directed by Steve Miner. Producer Steve Truitt. Co-producers, Carol Bank and Neil Minnow. Screenplay, Carol Bank. Director of photography, Jeffrey Jay. Production designer, George Foyos. Music, Ron Stein. Edited by David Foster. Cast: C. Thomas Howland (Mark Walker), Arpe Gross (Gordon Bloomfield), Rae Dawn Chong (Sarah Walker), James Earl Jones (Professor Banks), Melvin Frank (Pete Day), Courtney B. Vance (Dr. Curtis), Production company, Silver World Productions in association with Disney-Film Investors. Distributor, Village Roadshow. 105m. 141 minutes. USA, 1988.

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MEAN TO BE MILD: Jean-Claude Guillebaud and Christine Slater discuss the ups and downs of the manuscript file

• THE NAME OF THE ROSE

Umberto Eco writes a regular column in the Italian news-culture weekly *L'Espresso*. In mid-October last year, in the issue in which the film of his novel *The Name Of The Rose* was discussed, his column, 'Montresu's Misty Bag' (Montresu was the Roman goddess of wisdom), was about the manuscript book seller machines in Italy. Barometer, these sellers work, so that you always have to carry cash, which makes the machines unnecessary, so it doesn't matter if they don't work. The very essence of the machines makes these machines utterly futile.

His columns mostly concern such paradoxes. In that same issue of the weekly, in a section devoted to the film of his novel, Eco wrote a small tract, 'My First and Last Deconstruction', which takes pains to avoid all paradoxes, to state that his book and the film of that name have little if anything in common, and that as how it should be, since film and literature are completely different means, that he has no opinion or judgement to render on the film, that the film does not trouble him, and that he would

consider it ill-educated, disrespectful, offensive and vulgar if anyone asked him any more questions about it.

The film's director, Jean-Jacques Annaud, is equally as pains to dissociate the film from the book. In the film takes it is understood that the film is a 'palimpsest' of *The Name Of The Rose*. A palimpsest is a parchment or paper prepared in such a way that the writing on it may be rubbed out and another writing can appear, much like a slate which can be used over and over again. The two writings, the original and the writer-over writing, would obviously be different and probably unrelated, so that any observation of a relevance, will never any point to be made about differences, would be based and unimportant.

On the one hand Annaud can have all the benefits of the Eco novel (a world bestseller), on the other, he can dissociate himself from it and from any comparisons between his film and Eco's book. Eco makes the same point from the perspective of the writer, namely that the film is only a reading, an interpretation of his novel, not a transcription, hence there are no common terms for a judgement; hence no more questions, no more comparisons.

All of that of course is utterly ingenious. In the Umberto Eco 'business' it is the name of *The Name Of The Rose* that lends an immediate interest and appeal to any film based upon it, while one of the pleasures of the film, indeed, the very delight of the film, is to read, in fact, to imagine these two objects side by side, the film and the book. Having read the book it would be impossible to see the film without it and besides there is no need to, despite the film's demands and Eco's protestations (he concludes his essay in *L'Espresso* 'I shall now go and see the film again, trying to find the substance of a spectator who forgives the book').

Comparisons, often in the business of daily criticism, reduce itself to the good and the bad, in the case of *The Name Of The Rose*, a good and bad evaluation based on a comparison between film and book. But I think the comparisons can be richer than a simple collocation.

Let us begin with an unexpected regard of the film without the book. William of Baskerville and a young novice, Adrian Melk, enter a monastery in Northern Italy to attend a clerical-academic debate. It is the mid-14th century. The debate concerns matters of doctrine and social policy involving the Franciscans and the official Church. The monastery is Benedictine. William is a Franciscan, as is Adrian. (In the book he is, importantly, a Benedictine.) The violent death of a monk has just occurred and within the space of no more than a few days, more deaths take place. William seeks to discover their cause. Adrian is both character in the narrative and its narrator, recalling, when he is no longer young, these events of his youth.

There are a series of 'structural' differences which surround these deaths and their investigation: between obvious causes and hidden ones, between external explanations and explanations of religion, man or the devil. These structure the action of the film, but are also matters of ideology. Questions of cause or faith, the obvious and the hidden, are matters of importance in the period, identified to by burnings of witches, the Inquisition, clerical debates, differences in attitude between Benedictines and Franciscans toward knowledge. The deaths are 'caused' by the kabbalistic reading of an allegedly non-existing book, Aristotle's *Trauma as Comedy*, which has been hidden in the great library of the monastery. Those who die mostly die from frothing and reading the book, its pages have been sprinkled with arsenic by an old, blind, intensely conservative Benedictine. As they read, turning the pages and wetting their fingers, they take in the arsenic and expire. Knowledge dies with them. The non-existence of the Aristotle *Trauma* is preserved (much like the paradox of the Nazarenes) Faith, whose enemies are thought to be paradox, laughter and reason, is preserved. The monks die out of a desire for what is outside faith, for reason, but they die too



JOHN CARPENTER, LEFT, MEETS JOHN GOODMAN, WHO REPLICATES HIS FATHER

THE FLY/DEADLY FRIEND

"There are limits to the imagination. Now, go beyond those limits." The trailer to David Cronenberg's *The Fly* says something along these lines. It's a fairly standard promotional line for science-fiction films, and although the words may often change themselves, the idea of "going beyond", or of "reaching new frontiers" in control, I think Captain Kirk's voice-over for each episode of *Star Trek*, declaring "to go where no man has gone before", will be the condition of popular films for a little while longer, at least. But, tucked away in these words might sound, I would like to remind you to take in some recent films. If limits to human imagination and scientific action, then, like the incantations of latex for special effects, these limits have been given plenty.

Think of a thick rubber band, it forms an enclosure and yet it is something that can be stretched, wound out, expanded, and so long as it doesn't snap, it will form an enclosure. The point is that it's not a matter of a "going beyond", or an "out there" as it were, but of an interiority, as though deferring and rebelling limits within limits. The invention of the telepod in *The Fly* will bring to us and all ideas of transport, borders and space, and yet it will be the very thing that either out a border, so that Seth Brundle to his ilk, and, at the same time releases his body, activating a range of physical mobility.

It didn't seem too long ago that we had entered in what Phillip Strick called "the age of the replicant". With Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* foregrounding the idea of the "double" and could certainly see psychoanalysis peering round the corner too. Even today it is difficult to forget the scene in *Blade Runner* where Ripley (Harrison Ford) replicates the skull of his maker, Tyrell — the man whose replicant Ripley calls "father". And could it only be the fictional that the bone cranking begins with thoughts pressing deep into Tyrell's eye sockets?

But at the same time that we welcomed *Blade Runner* we failed to recognize that the age of the replicant had almost run its

course. The boundaries between science-fiction and horror had long been shattered; the hardware of science met with the powers of horror and a new cycle had become evident, a new being was in motion. The ad-line for John Carpenter's *The Thing* is a prime example: "This is the worst place to be".

Psychoanalysis does not seem to be as institutionalized into the present cycle. As soon as technological reproduction had become the focus for metaphysical questioning, technology had no other place to go than into the working of our physiology. The hardware of science met the 'hardware' of anatomy. It is not, however, necessarily only a matter of knowing what makes the human brain, but also of knowing what makes the heart beat periodic. As it is suggested in *The Fly*, it is the "poetry of the flesh" that the telepod computer must learn if it is to interpret living organisms. But this is not at all to say that the question of being is abandoned as a concern. "I am an insect that dreamt I was a man, and loved it. Now the dream is over", is again *The Fly* at its own poetic and philosophical moment.

We have reached a stage with technology where the possibility of what we could call "translucence", replacing the idea of evolution, is plausible. In Wes Craven's *Deadly Friend* the implantation of an artificial brain, not in place of, but, along with a human brain is made analogous to a painkiller for the heart. And a painkiller is now a surgery. Fictions between differing natural and artificial organisms, species and matter, appears to be a continuing thread in much of contemporary cinema, and if indeed we can witness today a cinema which is anthropological, which is concerned with our evolutionary origins, then films like *The Fly* and *Deadly Friend* seem to attest to a cinema disidentified with this very idea. It seems somewhat that *The Fly* is implicitly aware of the invitation to inspect "The Remacle Museum of Natural History", which is no more than a bathroom cabinet where Remacle stores the scientist's ear,

fingers and teeth, is a sad farewell to the notion of evolution in favour of a genetic takeover.

Consider this for a fusion of sorts: rather than some merely hermetic psychoanalytic model, maybe (and I do mean maybe), just for the time that it takes to read this review, an appropriate concept might be the notion of "becoming" articulated by Felix Guattari. A notion that, at what Guattari calls a molecular level, there are no firmly established black-and-white categories, a level that erases clear-cut dividing lines, and where a being can be, instead, presented with several and often contradictory impulses. The thought is a delicious one; it could stand for much of contemporary cinema. In *Time of Stone*, for instance, Monaghan's suggestion that Antonio be seduced by Bob for him to know what it is like to be fucked, opens the way for a feminine "becoming". In *Just Men*, a white youth discards his upper middle-class existence and sets about "becoming" black. But where the notion seems most inappropriate is in recent science-fiction/horror, where our bodies are made more and more like a rubber band — stretched, tugged out, expanded — the representatives for abstract, irrational, violent, emotional energies and impulses of our technological age.

Neither an analogue to *The Fly*, nor Wes Craven's earlier *Nightmare on Elm Street*, *Deadly Friend*, nonetheless, modestly compares and contrasts a number of anxieties with one another. The indication that the cute robot, Bee Bee, has a will beyond the control of his 12-year-old inventor, and the subtle-planned edge of what seems to be an ordinary American middle-class neighborhood, are alternately deflected and unsettled, once the fusion of human and robot takes its course. Recalling this sort of comparison in *Deadly Friend*'s ending, as we hear off camera, respectively, the girl's voice asking, "Come to me Paul", the boy's answer, and then the robotic, "Yes Bee".

If it looks as though I am not giving *Deadly Friend* space equal to that of *The Fly*, it is probably because I feel that *The Fly* stands on the idea of a "twined back". An interplay between the mind, intelligence or ideas and thinking is something that is established at the film's very beginning. At the social gathering at the Barker dinner show, both promise to Veronica that both at last let in an invention that will change the world as we know it, is a virtual "pickup". His remark, "I thought this was prearranged", once he has discovered that he has revealed the telepod to a science journalist, tends to confirm this. And what could be at the heart of phrases such as "plunge into the plasma pool" and the "dynamic duo club" but the anxious thought that science (transformation through the telepod) will provide for interconnected sexual activity.

A "twined back" is probably a good metaphor for the way films like *The Fly* and, to some degree, *Deadly Friend* are calculated. If our bodies are taken as the

WEARTH

possible . . . that we must not encourage nationalism, nor . . . [integrate] in vegetation and the depiction of the remnants of the primitive past . . ." Another member of China's film establishment, veteran director Xia Yan, warned in all seriousness that "if we let things go, there will be an unconscious drift towards 'art for art's sake' and 'inspiration for the sake of innovation'."

The controversy which plagued *Yellow Earth* in China, as sampled above, might seem a trifle unqualifying to Australian audiences. In China, however, the official aesthetic of socialist realism demands that in literature and film good guys (and that would necessarily include poor peasants) look good, bad guys look bad and they all get their just deserts in the end. *Yellow Earth* not only failed to dispense neat portions of poetic justice, socialist-style, but it was the first film made since 1949 to 'de-romanticize' the countryside. The peasantry, normally represented as a heroic and potentially progressive force, all appeared thin and weary-looking good looks, in this film are portrayed as a grim, backward, feudal and self-appealing mass.

According to friends, moreover, the good communist Gu Qing ought to have led the villagers down the path of the Great Red Way in salvation. Gu may be well-intentioned but he proves relatively powerless to affect their lives. This was particularly galling to the authorities in light of his coming from Yan'an. The Yan'an period



SOLDIERING ON: Liu Qing and Wang Kaifu

was the communist's 'golden age', one speaks of it with reverence and lowered eyes. One certainly does not imply that its shining radiance faded slowly and absolutely to illuminate the lives of peasants living within becoming distance.

Director Chen Kaige was only 32 when he made *Yellow Earth*, his debut feature. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), like many of his contemporaries, Chen had been sent down to the countryside to "learn from the peasants". The editors of *South of Fire*, a recently-published anthology of contemporary Chinese literature which devotes a entire chapter to *Yellow Earth* (including excerpts from the official debate quoted here), comment on the effect that experience was to have on Chen's vision. He saw that despite several decades of communist rule, the peasantry in many places and in many ways remained nearly as backward and poor as before.

"Enslavement". In this sense, *Yellow Earth* is not a historical film at all, and this, the editors note, was one of its most disturbing aspects for "authoritarian communist viewers". Chen made *Yellow Earth* through the Guangxi Film Studio, a relatively minor, provincial studio. Far from the more politicized atmosphere of the bigger studios in Peking and Shanghai, Chen was able to achieve a relatively high degree of artistic control over his production. Other "5th generation" directors have headed for the hills to shoot films which they knew might be too controversial to even make; it just scrips finger in the bigger studios. The provincial studios in addition generally have been more willing to afford their younger filmmakers the chance to direct in the first place.

Yellow Earth was finished in late 1984. Initially, it was banned from international release. When it was finally allowed to accept invitations from film festivals abroad, it captured the Silver Leopard at Locarno, the East-West Centre Award and Eastern Kodak Award in Hawaii and the prize for best cinematography at Nantes. It never made it to Cannes because a "bureaucratic error" resulted in a video copy being sent to the judges, who only accept celluloid. (China has entered other films in the Cannes festival; it is impossible that the officials responsible for this "mistake" didn't know the rules.) In Cannes itself, the judges for the official "Golden Rooster" awards, after much deliberation, cautiously pronounced what was obviously the most outstanding 'art' film their cinema industry had produced in more than three decades with top honors in its cinematography category only. But one of the judges, veteran actress, producer and writer Huang Zongying, chimed her fellow adjudicators, "Let me tell you something: it's our own children who are no longer tolerant of the unchanging realities of China, the stagnant productive forces of the peasants as well as the dead film language we use. They have the courage to break all the rules and they have risked your sides up the wrong way. But the future," she insisted, "is on their side." Let's hope she's right.

Linda Jewett

YELLOW EARTH Directed by Chen Kaige. Producer: Guo Shao. Screenplay: Zhang Yanyan. Based on the essay *Earth* in the story by the late Director of photography Zhang Yanyan. Music: Zhao Jinyi. Editor: Fu Guohua. Cost: Guo Shao. Wang Hong Shu Qing. Yan Yao (written). Liu Qing (written). Wan Fuxian (written). T. Wang. (written). Guangxi Film Studio. China. Production: GFC. Guangxi Film Studio. Distributor: Pines. Screen: 35 mm. China, 1984.



• BETTY BLUE

Outraged to fame and glory by the cast and perhaps overstated *Big* (1983) and then maritally (if not sexually) used down for his self-indulgence but largely misunderstood *The Moon Is The Gutter* (1983), director Jean-Jacques Beineix, in the space of only two films, has experienced both extremes of filmmaking — no joys and no tears, but more importantly, no luck and no traps. Yet, Beineix is a gambler, and if the success and failure of his two previous films somehow intrinsically neutralize each other, his third film, *Betty Blue* (*37° 2 Le Minutes*) allows him to start from scratch again, learn from his mistakes and take another major risk.

Based on a novel by Philippe Dyan, *Betty Blue* is Beineix's most mature and selfless film to date. Recapturing the flair of *Big* and the beauty of *The Moon Is The Gutter*, and devoid of the coquetry and style that characterized both films, it goes straight to the point, teaches and troubles and consequently provokes.

The subject, a love story, with its two classical and fundamental elements, a couple and an adventure, a macroscopic study of obsessive love. The story deals with the heady relationship between 38-year-old Zorg (Jean-Hugues Anglade), who would be content to spend the rest of his life cooing child, making love and painting beach balls, and 30-year-old Betty (Blanche Delly), vulnerable and wild, marked with a passion for passion. As much as Zorg seems enamored as his peaceful and routine lifestyle, Betty refuses to make any compromises. One day she comes across a pile of little black notebooks filled with Zorg's writing. Certain that she has discovered the greatest writer of his generation, she is determined to get him published. In a rage, she sets fire to their bungalow and offers him the chance to live an adventure of solitary passion. He accepts.

From the beginning of *Betty Blue*, Beineix exposes the two principal traits which have undeniably become his trademark: antipatheticism and self-confidence. The opening shot shows a couple making love, slowly and tenderly above them, on the wall, the Mona Lisa watches with an accomplished smile. Impossibly, we move closer to them. This shot lasts a long time and each only after the sexual encounter is reached before our eyes. Almost natural in its effect, this unadorned display of the naked selves, in a more sustaining way, the problem of nudity and sexuality on screen, to that very exposure that follows appears neither coy nor seductive. It is a scene which has no contribution in the film but one that acts as a paradigm right from the start. Like a prelude, it also introduces the main theme: desperation and its inevitable breakdown.

If *Betty Blue* is a melodrama full of suspense (from the richness of the

emotions and not from that it provokes), it is also, in a typical Beineix fashion, a film marked by a tremendously wicked sense of humor — a lightheartedness which precedes the dramatic scenes as if to give them their force and to drag us more deeply into the gravity of the situations.

There is no sad or happy ending to the film but a sense of desperate hope, a feeling embracing the painful love of life. Betty's journey toward madness occurs progressively and we never know at which particular point it becomes dangerous. Her destiny is mentioned by her madness. Zorg goes back to writing as Betty flees him, and he is obliged to confront the duality between writing and love. The ultimate question then becomes: should we have no choice between life and art?

Modern poet of obsession and, undeniably, representative of a generation, Beineix the author communicates more than adequately Beineix the technician in *Betty Blue*, correctly maintaining perfect equilibrium and grace between the two. Helped by his talented leading actors, Jean-Hugues Anglade (*L'Homme d'Alger*, *Saboteur*) and newcomer Blanche Delly, and an exceptional cast, including Gerard Darmon, Comtesse de Harcourt and Jacques Mathou, Beineix brilliantly composes a wounding and lyrical film which encapsulates the extreme passion and lack of direction of *Passer l'été* and criss (literally) with a pulse in the eye.

Is it just a coincidence that *Betty Blue* evokes comparison with a certain cinema of the 1920s that dealt with madness — madness glorified as non-conformity, rebellion against society — and more recently, with Godard's *Permet le Pire*? There are parallels that can be established: between the main characters, Ferdinand/Zorg, Mary/Mary, between the scenarios, as responses to modernity or swept away by the female presence, as couples leave one environment for another. And in the American war America, and the reckless blindness of its vision, *Betty Blue* (and for that matter, Beineix's cinema), promises a considerable revolution and resurrection of a cinematic language lost becoming redundant. However, this is not to imply that Beineix's film should be considered the basis of its times to the same degree as Godard's, yet its acute reflection of its generation cannot be underestimated.

Robert Sigman



HEARTBURN Meryl Streep occupies the foreground

• HEARTBURN

Finally, the movie, is the last stage of a process, a publicity juggernaut that has lumbered along ever since it was announced as gossip columns that Nora Ephron, journalist and author, was writing a novel, a "fictional" work about the affair that her husband conducted while Ephron was pregnant with their second child.

The husband was Carl "Watergate" Bernstein. The other woman was the daughter of a former British Prime Minister and the wife of the then British ambassador to the U.S. (husband the brother of the co-writer of *For Men Only*). Details that helped to make this tale of high infidelity all the more tantalizing.

So if you've seen the article on the book, the interviews with Bernstein, with the women, if you've read the book

see the film. See Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep under their own particular form of celebrity as the already celebrated Bernstein and Ephron (or Mark Taper and Rachel Samuels, to give them their movie names).

Three layers of reputation make it difficult to see the film as a separate entity from the book, if this were desirable or possible. Either way, for many viewers, the film has been a letdown. It has been declared *Not As Funny As The Book*, Meryl Streep described as *Not Jewish Enough*, and Jack Nicholson's performance has been compared to his work in *The Shogun*, where he posed rather a different kind of threat to the stability of family life.

Certainly there is something more sober and down-paired about the film. It adopts a strictly chronological narrative structure, while the book began with the resolution of the affair, moved around in time, and was interspersed with snippets — a touch that has an extraordinarily responsive chord in readers. Snippets in *New Men* are just snippets, but Lillian Hellman's pot roast in the middle of a novel, while glaring.

The book's sometimes whimsical, sometimes despairing, always conventional snip and crackle made the reader into an intimate, a confidante. In the film, we observe Rachel from a distance. At the same time, a sort of first person perspective is maintained: we get Rachel's story, Rachel's version but not

BETTY BLUE (37° 2 Le Minutes) Directed by Jean-Jacques Beineix. Executive Producer: Claude Dahan. Screenplay: Jean-Jacques Beineix. Based on the novel by Philippe Dyan. Director of photography: Jean-Paul Rapp. An director: Denis Corin. Music: Gabriel Yared. 1987. Monique Film. Cast: Jeanne Dely, Meryl Streep, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Comtesse de Harcourt, Jacques Mathou. (Video Production: Columbia Pictures Inc. in association with the Centre National du Cinéma. Graphic Information on Cultural Computer. Fox Cinema's 35mm. 197 Minutes. France: 1988)



Jack Nicholson remains a shadowy figure

Rachel's voice: "There's none of the 'I's any more and I'll cry if I want or 'wive of the literary Rachel, who told us: "Does now I cannot believe that Mark would want to risk losing that virginity. You just don't bump into virginitates that good."

She also wrote "Why do I have to turn everything into a story? Because if I tell the story, I control the version. Because all I tell the story I can make you laugh and I would rather have you laugh at me than feel sorry for me. Because if I tell the story, it doesn't hurt as much." There's not the kind of self-consciousness at work in the film.

We are her self-deception from the beginning, but somehow we're always invited to sympathize with it. They meet at a wedding; her eyes are already filled with tears at the phrases about "long-suffering, kind, all-encompassing" love, while he starts to snore. He's single, she's told — sorry, very single.

But neither, she assumes here, and reveals in the illusion of security that domesticity confers. She loves to figure out where to hang pictures, and what's for dinner, and do they owe the Richardson's — but Mark? We really don't know about Mark. His existence is taken for granted: the husband, then the dad. In the circumstances, it doesn't seem appropriate to talk about mothering. Jack Nicholson has a few stony set-pieces which show that he is game to try anything, even things about pretence, but these spasms of energy can't disguise the fact that he is to all intents and purposes absent from the film.

What book and film do share is food. Food represents, sometimes stands in for intimacy, friendship, career, marriage, sex/love. "When we're married I want you to cook that once a week," Mark says, after Rachel brings him spaghetti-carbonara in bed at 4 am. Rachel likes rice pudding, her friends tell Mark respectfully, implying that the suburban beast doesn't even know his favourite foods.

But in the book, all this dread about bread pudding and linguine and six kinds of lettuce and lima beans with peas, the celebration of potatoes and bagels and roasted almonds, is vigorous, appealing: it's written by someone with an appetite for food and all sorts of

other things. In the film, that vigour has been reined into glossy, governed magazine thickness, tricked out with a soundtrack from Carly Simon, queen of romantic agency for Volvo owners, who was saying "That's The Way I Always Heard It Should Be" more than a decade before Ephron told us that marriage doesn't work — director works.

Philipa Brander

HEARTBEAT Directed by Mike Nichols. Producers: Mike Nichols and Robert Greenblatt. Associate producers: Joel Tabor. Screenplay: Tom Eklund based on her novel. Director of photography: Bruce A. Merritt. Production design: Tony Holton. Music: Carly Simon. Editor: Sam O'Steen. Cost: David Gramp. (Booked) Jack Bernstein. (Music) Jeff Gerson. (Production) Maureen Stinson. (Hair) Richard Channing. (Makeup) Richard Miller. (Stylist) Catherine C. Shaw. (Model) Susan Hill. (Catering) Production company: Paramount Pictures. Copyright © 1989 USA 1989.

• CRIMES OF THE HEART

After Bruce Beresford's mistress *King David* and the embarrassingly paternalistic *Prize Winner*, one could be forgiven for thinking that the director was either slipping, or had shown true form. The release of *Crimes of the Heart*, however, contradicts Beresford's talents as a skillfully crafted, tasteful comedy, only marginally flawed by weaknesses of script. (This is a surprising feature, considering Beth Henley adapted the screenplay from her own Pulitzer Prize-winning stage play.)

In *Crimes of the Heart*, set in the contemporary period of South, all the protagonists are losers or victims. The three main characters, the McGrath sisters, gain sympathy from their idiosyncratic foibles, which protect them from the crimes ascribed into their morally unambiguous situation.

The treatment is mainly made up of brief vignettes, isolating instances of compassion, family strife, sibling rivalry, confusion, resistance and complicity. Tension and dramatic interest are derived from the abrupt changes in the group dynamic, the trajectory of confidence and petty point-scoring.

Winning Lennie (Diane Keaton), Babe (Sissy Spacek) and Meg McGrath (Frances Lange) individually or collectively, are suspects more than just a hint of insanity in the McGrath family. When Babe is released on bail after impulsively shooting her husband (previously reacquainted as a later flashback sequence) and doubtfully questions her own sanity, big sister Lennie admonishes her "Why Babe, you're just as perfectly sane as anyone walking the streets of Hattiesburg, Mississippi — even more so!"

In a few scenes the fractured camaraderie becomes too strained (such as the bathroom outburst which accompanies the news that "grandpa is in a coma?") This film's catch, however, is the degree of control the players exert over their material, retaining the potential to collapse into either hysteria or farce.

The most compelling sequences display explosive outbursts (often by Keaton), for example, when Lennie berates Meg for trying each of the individual assorted crimes themselves that were her sole birthday present, or the dream-like reminiscence of the role of a nostalgic past (in which their mother's bizarre "double suicide" with a cat is vibrantly recalled). For all their silliness and erratic behaviour, the genuine and reciprocal affection of the sisters generates a warm sympathetic atmosphere.

In supporting roles, Sara Shepard (Doc Farrow) is perfunctory as Meg's lover, but Tess Harper steals the show as Chick Boyle, a brilliantly realized, classic Southern bitch. Ken Adam's production design is superbly understated and the combination of Garrett Lewis' art direction and Dante Spinotti's photography gives the McGrath household an almost surreal feel.

In many ways, the audience is like Meg as the opening scene — we get off the bus at Hattiesburg and we've got a lot of catches' up to do. For the McGrath girls, the screenplay is a process of removal and liberation — Babe has a moving revelation regarding her mother's death, Lennie discovers the power of self-determination, and Meg comes to terms with an old romance she has run away from. For the audience, it amounts to a delight.

Mark Brander

CRIMES OF THE HEART Directed by Bruce Beresford. Producers: Francis Ford Coppola. Associate producers: Bert Sugarman, Screenplay: Beth Henley. Director of photography: Steve Rosen. Production design: Sam Adams. Editor: Georges Olszewski. Cost: Anne Gorman. (Booked) Sam O'Steen. (Production) Maureen Stinson. (Hair) Richard Channing. (Makeup) Richard Miller. (Stylist) Catherine C. Shaw. (Model) Susan Hill. (Catering) Production company: Paramount Pictures. Copyright © 1989 USA 1989.

• RECENT RELEASES

A Supplementary Guide

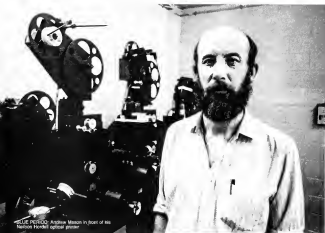
January:

- An American Tail (UIP)*
- Brave Lee — The Legend (CEL)
- Club Paradise (Village Roadshow)
- Cross Wave (CEL)
- Death In A French Garden (Roxin)
- Decorations (Filmways)
- Golden Child (UIP)
- Night Myster (UIP)
- Prison (Hayes)
- Running Scared (UIP)*
- Saved Hearts (Roxin)
- Shanghai Surprise (CEL)*
- A Zed And Two Noughts (Roxin)*

February:

- Children Of A Lesser God (UIP)*
- Jumpin' Jack Flash (Fox Columbia)
- The Morning After (Village Roadshow)
- Something Wild (Village Roadshow)
- Avenging Force (Hayes)

*Reviewed in Cinema Papers 81 January 1989



BLUE PRINTING Andrew Mason in front of his Nelson Hoodall optical printer

BIG SCREEN BLUES

A blue screen, part of the pro-

cess which allows one or more

images to be introduced over

already shot material, is a rare

sight in Australian filmmaking.

FRED HARDEN examines the

history, aesthetics, problems

and prospects of the technique.

The first extensive blue screen matting work for an Australian feature film will have been completed by the time you read this issue. Mirage Effects in Sydney are completing the post-production effects for their extensive work on Australia's latest science fiction feature *The Time Guardian*. Andrew Mason from Mirage talked about the history behind the blue screen process and their experiences during the model and effects filming for that production. He stresses that he was talking without the benefit of seeing the final composite results from the shoot in Adelaide. The blue screen was the final voice of main suit abiding with director of photography Geoff

Burton. *The Time Guardian* involved a large Mirage crew in extensive model work, optical and physical effects, and a lengthy post-production period is still ahead.

VIDEO AND FILM MATTES

Most people are familiar with the video equivalents of blue screen, chroma key and UltraMate, yet debate being involved since BO (Before Color) in the production of TV commercials. I've never used blue screen film mattes, or even seen the process used in Australia. I took this to be just another use of the many ages that video technology was destined solely to replace film optics. UltraMate is a straight

electronic equivalent of the blue screen process. The picture is separated into the red, green and blue and the difference between the three colours is used to make a mask. With that mask, you block out that part of the scene so that you can insert part of another.

In video, what comes out of the Ultratec is an image where the blue screen has been dropped out and black inserted. At the same time, a black and white silhouette mask is produced which is the difference between the black (formerly blue) and the red. The black hole allows you to insert another image electronically as a key. On film, the image is inserted by printing in an optical printer.

RISE AND FALL OF THE BLUES

Andrew Mason explains that "Blue screen had fallen into disrepute in the fifties and sixties because people couldn't get it to look convincing for all applications it was," he said, "misdirected most visibly by the people who did the effects on *Star Wars*. Because of the bulk of material they had to do Lucasfilm were able to experiment and perfect the technique.

"Along with the rejection of George Lucas's money, lenses improved, lighting sources got better and, importantly, the blue screen information was shared. This knowledge was critical to the future of blue screen because even now it is possible to see bad blue screen work in lots of big budget films. It seems that the sudden popularity of deep space adventures helped the Americans to get it right more often than the Europeans. The main reason seems to be the result of people moving from one place to another and taking with them the accumulated knowledge and information."

THE USA CONNECTION

Last year the principal of the US effects company Apogee, John Dykstra, was brought out by the Australian Film Commission (AFC) to share some of his experiences with local filmmakers. He and his partners gave a brief talk, in question time they defenestrated the poor quality of some of

the examples that had been shown, saying how difficult it was to get things right and how often circumstances were beyond their control.

According to Mason, "Every major group that is now involved in effects in the US was either involved with Dykstra or involved with Douglas Trumbull. It seems that if you were involved with Trumbull then you hated blue screen because Trumbull liked to use the bigger negative of 65mm and he couldn't get the right printing stocks for 35mm. So he rationalised it by hating blue screen.

"If you were involved with Star Wars (John Dykstra) then you had to use blue screen because of the sheer volume of model effects shots that you had to do. It saved the time of another pass with the motion control rig to shoot a booklet reader, and instead of a high conical model shape they needed the subtlety of the blue screen system to hold the motion blur that makes the model appear to rotate.

"Another reason for the Star Wars production's use of the blue screen was because they were shooting miniatures that were being filmed around by motion control rigs all over the studio. Conventional techniques like front or back projection, would have been almost impossible.

ORGANIC REACTIONS

Mason explains, "Blue screen isn't an easy process because you're dealing with fire and that's a chemical process. I guess that it is also more difficult on film because you are not looking at it in real time like you do on video. The composite doesn't happen until much later and it is an organic reaction instead of an electronic one."

The alternative of front projection has its limitations. Complicated camera moves on miniatures are restricted by the size of the projection screen, but more usually it is the scheduling of a picture that doesn't allow you to shoot the model or effects background plates first. If you're doing front projection it looks you into the combined image. With blue screen you can at least do the model work to it later and at a time when you are usually under less pressure. Cinematographers also seem

to find it marginally easier to light for blue screen. Special effects cinematographer and printer in Mirage Effects, Paul Nichols, has done a lot of front projection work and he and DCP Geoff Burton had no problems with the blue screen sequences on *The Time Guardians*.

BEHIND THE SCREEN

"It was not just having the right screen," Mason said. "We had to get the right light behind it, so that only blue light would reach the camera. The original method was to use a lot of PARs and evenly spaced, but that was incredibly hot and inefficient. But they used the same stretched blue plastic material that we have bought from the one person who makes it, Patrick Stewart of the Stewart Film Screen company."

"Stewart's method is interesting. He mixes up a plastic substrate with a special colour paint as a hot liquid which is pumped into a spray bar, over a long table that springs upward onto an aluminium ceiling. It moves along leaving a perfectly even coating that, when cool, he separates from the aluminium and the sheet falls onto paper laid on the table, and bangs he's got a blue screen. Then all he has to do is put rollers in the edge to stretch it onto a frame.

"The result is one single seamless piece of material up to a maximum of 40 by 40 feet and it is wonderful for stretching because it has

shape memory. By its formulation, it transmits only blue light, or almost only blue light, with just a touch of green. When it is by conventional tungsten lights there would be enough green to cause problems. Film requires purely blueish green will record in the green layer of the emulsion and contaminate the mate."

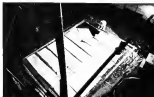
Mating on television is not as critical. There you don't need the purity of the blue up or down, but for film you must have a pure blue, and you can't get that by lighting a painted background.

"During the twenties, various people found that if you got the right fluorescent tubes you could drive a bank of lights that were much cooler, and if they were the tubes that architects use for blueprint plan printing they produced intense ultraviolet light that was much more efficient. They then had a flicker problem from the flicker. This isn't a problem with motion control or model work because the shutter is open for a long time, but so that they could shoot live action they had to stop the flicker. In England where they started this, at Pinewood and Elstree, they found that they could run the tubes on DC to eliminate flicker, but they needed to reverse the polarity regularly to stop the gases moving to one end. This method required big heavy switching gear and it was bulky stuff."

Someone then found that fluorescent lights in violet



SCREEN TEST. Three of *The Time Guardians* cast in front of the blue screen



BLUES: MCVISOL Securing the screen onto its frame

for some reason have to run at 30,000 cycles — rather than the usual 50 to 60 cycles — and a number of manufacturers had the frequency conversion equipment available. This solved the flicker problem on film and people started to use the lights on AC but at 30,000 cycles. This made the screens easy to use, lightweight and transportable. The frequency converters are small, and the bellies at the same size as on a normal fluoro tube.

THE MIRAGE BLUE SCREEN

Mirage bought their backlighting rig from England. "We have an ongoing relationship with Dated Scientific Films," said Mason, and they arranged the manufacture of 14 panels, each ten and a half feet by two and a quarter. Each contains six evenly spaced tubes five feet long. It plugs into standard AC and draws one and a half amps each panel while producing an enormous amount of light.

"In front of the tubes we stretch a diffusion screen and then the Slowest blue screen on an aluminum frame. Our screen is 20 by 15 feet and the whole lot can be clamped by scaffold clamps to a scaffold frame. The nice thing is that it only takes about a day to erect and all that you have to do is turn it on for an incredibly intense, even light source."

"For this film, we were using Eastman 5247 shooting at 24 frames. The right stop was somewhere about eight and a half. That was the right level for the blue screen and you then light the foreground to match. We had hoped that physically setting it up would be as simple as it was, but

shooting it correctly we knew was going to be a long process of trial and error."

"We did a blue screen shot for *Batle* and *Miles* that didn't get out into it. It looked pretty awful. We had a small scale blue screen with fluorescent tubes and the right transmission plastic material so that we could experiment. It allowed us to at least ask the right questions, but ultimately we had to do it properly."

"So we decided to get some help, especially for the post-production phase."

A LITTLE HELP FROM FRIENDS

"We had contact through various friends with Mike Varjo who had originally worked at Lucasfilm in the optical department at the time they started *Copies*. *Sinks* Black. He worked on *Potter*, *Gregory*, *Reagan*, *Andrew* and *Reagan* of the Jack, then ran the optical department at *Boston*, doing 2010 and *Shogun*, then on to *Potter*, *Gregory* and *The Boy who Could Fly*.

"After all that, he was looking a bit burnt out and we convinced him to come out here for a holiday and a chat, which he did. He is very free and frank with all his help and that gave us an 'in' to all those last 10 years of development. We have just started the post-production of the blue screen scenes and it is great to know that he is around to help if we get into trouble, we just couldn't have done it any other way."

Of all the advice that Mirage were given, the main point was that just having the screen is not enough. You have to test the lenses you are shooting with to ensure

that they don't have transmission problems or flare particular colours. Obviously you need extra steady gel-registered camera because you are going to put two screens together and movement against each of them would be obvious on the large screen. And you need the right lenses in the optical printer. Mirage got an American lens designer to work out the lens system, and they replaced all the lenses on their Mellesco Handell printer.

"They also found that they needed to have their own film processing setup because the process involves making black and white separations which is a delicate procedure. As Mason said, "We have always processed our own high contrast masters but this is pinholematic master positive, and for a film laboratory it's a pain in the ass, involving small lengths with very particular set-ups just wouldn't be economical for them. It is even difficult for someone like Rank in London to do it. So we are putting in our own processing machine which is what most of the effects houses in Los Angeles have done — even in Hollywood the labs are not interested in the fine control required."

FILM STOCKS FOR THE BLUES

Conventional colour negative stocks are used for shooting, and the printing stocks that are used for blue screen are all widely available as they are used for making three colour separations for colour printing masters. For their work Mirage are using Kodak Pan Superpan Type 5205. The new Kodak colour

negative stock 5205 was announced at the time of the 1988 SMPTE conference (see *Cinema Papers* 58 September 1988). This is an ASA Tungsten rated film stock specifically made for blue screen, which is extra sensitive to blue. The film is more expensive because it is manufactured to higher performance tolerances but for model work where maximum depth of focus requires stopping down to the smallest aperture the high speed is obviously useful.

FUTURE POTENTIAL

Ease of set-up and consistency of lighting are not the only advantages of the Mirage rig. The high output level of the tubes opens up a number of possibilities. Mason made the observation, "That we were shooting stuff that was at normal speed and we were quite happy to have the foreground lit to 18.5. But one of the potentials of the screen we would love to pursue is, if you were shooting on film for ultimate masters made of telecine, all that light would allow you to shoot high speed up to 300 frames per second. Then you could have, for example slow motion pouring shots for your beer."

commercial on a perfect original key blue background it would be almost impossible to pump that much light onto a normal painted background.

As a production tool for Australia features the Mirage blue screen and their growing expertise in its use are welcome and long overdue.

For details contact Andrew Mason on (02) 888 5666, at 10 Byfield Street, North Ryde.



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Australian productions top \$175 million

Cannes rolled on 55 Australian features, miniseries and telefeatures in the 1986 calendar year (January-December) with budgets totaling \$174,521,607. In addition, five telefeatures were produced in the ABC, and although exact figures are not available, above-the-line costs of these productions would bring the overall total to well over the \$175 million mark.

This represents a 523 million increase from the previous year despite the fact that fewer productions got under way. See *Cinema Papers* 26 March 1986.)

Budget figures given in the charts are those supplied to *Cinema Papers* by producers. A number of producers — those whose productions are marked N/A, in the budget column — did not want their budgets published but were prepared to supply them off the record, to enable us to compute the overall figures and averages.

Whether or not it is an indicator of a new phenomenon, we felt it was more accurate to place the ABC/International Film Management production *Great Expectations — The Unfold Story* in a separate category, as a budget breakdown of the contained tele-transmission is near impossible.

Two overseas productions, *A Place to Call Home* and *Facts of Life Downunder* both shot segments in Australia during the year with *Downunder*. The amount spent on production costs in Australia was substantial enough to warrant inclusion in the budget table.

However, extended series such as *Cleopatra Productions: The Henderson Kids* or *Gundys' Spies and Daughters* which saw significant in terms of ongoing industry activity have not been included.

In the case of the telefeature *Round of Music* a budget was unavailable because labour was voluntary and production facilities were donated. Also for the feature *Candy Ragering*, the budget at a

THEATRICAL FEATURES

TITLE (Production company/Producer/Director)	BUDGET	PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
<i>Backlash</i> (Mermaid Beach Productions/Sir Bennett/Sir Bennett)	250,000	8 January
<i>Backstage</i> (Backstage Films/Frank Howson/Jonathan Hardy)	7,800,000	7 March
<i>Belinda</i> (Fontana Productions/Sedric Belbin/Pamela Gibson)	3,400,000	26 August
<i>The Bill Post</i> (Cinema Ltd/Colin Goss, Peter Roberts/Bruce Mew)	1,000,000	17 November
<i>Candy Ragering</i> (Pang Day/Graeme Jones/James Robinson)	750,000	11 August
<i>Cassandra</i> (Cassandra Productions/Trevor Lucas/Colin Eggleston)	1,400,000	11 August
<i>Dark Age</i> (F G Film Productions (Kassaba) Pty Ltd for International Film Management Ltd/Sue Appleby/Mick Robinson)	4,800,000	20 April
<i>Dear Carlisle</i> (Mermaid Beach Productions/Sir Bennett/Sir Bennett)	N/A	10 September
<i>Dogs in Space</i> (Central Post Films/Garys Rose/Roland Lowenstein)	2,900,000	24 February
<i>Dot in Good Old Hollywood</i> (Hoson Gross Film Studio/Hoson Gross/Martin Gross)	N/A	1 July
<i>Frederick's Farm</i> (Miss Brewster Productions/Jean Goldburn/Don Ray)	2,400,000	17 February
<i>Ground Zero</i> (Ground Zero Pty Ltd/Michael Pattinson/Michael Pattinson Bruce Myers)	7,000,000	28 July
<i>High Tide</i> (S.E. Productions Pty Ltd for Bush Christmas Productions Pty Ltd and International Film Management Ltd/Sandra Long/Gillian Armstrong)	3,700,000	22 September
<i>Initiation</i> (Pinter Pty Ltd for International Film Management Ltd/Jane Balguy/Michael Pearce)	3,000,000	6 June
<i>Just Me</i> (Entertainment Media/Peter Jeffrey/Gordon Glen)	N/A	18 February
<i>Las Perlasian Saves the World</i> (Plampol Productions/Sue Milford/George Miller)	7,300,000	18 August
<i>The Lightkeepers</i> (Pinter Pty Ltd for International Film Management Ltd/Jane Balguy for International Film Management Ltd/Jane Balguy/Jane Balguy)	10,496,000	15 September
<i>The Marquis</i> — <i>Swelling 2</i> (Bancroft Holdings/Charles Waters/Neil Phipps/Mike Phipps)	2,000,000	18 October
<i>Patricia Knowl's The Underdog Women</i> (Laughing Kookaburra Productions/Jon Sharp/Pat Knowl)	3,000,000	7 April
<i>The Place at the Coast</i> (Cinema Ltd Films/Mary Furlong/George Ogilvy)	2,400,000	3 February
<i>Shadows of the Past</i> (Laughing Kookaburra Productions/Jane Sharp/Philip Myers)	2,400,000	5 May
<i>Shame</i> (Baron Films in association with GRA/Donna Fenn, Paul Baron/Glen Jochel)	1,000,000	14 April
<i>Starb, Wyn & Me</i> (Ugly Film Australia Pty Ltd for International Film Management Ltd/Tim Burton/Glen Jochel)	2,300,000	17 February
<i>Spirits of the Air, Gnomes of the Clouds</i> (Mansfield Eye Cinema/Mansfield Eye/Mansfield Eye)	600,000	14 April
<i>Speak</i> (Tasite Media Productions/David Hall, Don C. Phipps/David Hall)	N/A	17 November
<i>The Tale of Paddy Ross</i> (Glen Film Productions Pty Ltd for Standard Film Ltd and Film and General Holdings Pty Ltd/Mary Marquis, Andrew Reesman/Peter Selous)	1,200,000	2 June
<i>Those Dear Departed</i> (Philip Amical Productions/Philip Amical/Ted Robinson)	900,000	30 August
<i>The Time Guardians</i> (Glen-Dale Film Productions Pty Ltd for International Film Management Ltd and Cinema Productions Investments Ltd/Dorcas Alderson, Robert Laporte/Dorcas Alderson)	3,000,000	29 September
<i>To Market, To Market</i> (Kinney Ltd/Margie Rose/Virginia Rose)	400,000	11 August
<i>Traveling North</i> (New Pictures/Donna Fenn/Gail Schulz)	2,200,000	30 June
<i>Wyn Nights on a Snow-Making Train</i> (Western Pacific Film Ltd/Ross Selous, Peter Selous/Don Ray)	2,500,000	3 November

THEATRICAL FEATURE/MINISERIES

TITLE (Production company/Producer/Director)	BUDGET	PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
<i>Great Expectations — The Unfold Story</i> (The Australian Broadcasting Corporation for International Film Management Ltd/Tim Burton, Ray Johnston/Bruce)	5,000,000	10 March

M I N I S E R I E S

TITLE (Production company/Producer/Director)	BUDGET	PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
The Challenge (Roadshow, Coors & Carols) (Nelson DeMille Productions/Venture Mail) Bob London/Doris Thompson	4,800,000	17 February
Fields of Fire (Palm Beach Entertainment/David Eick) Steve Krimpen/Wob Murchand	3,750,000	6 October
The Heat In The South (Anthony Buckley Productions/Anthony Buckley/George Kinley)	4,800,000	24 February
Joe Wilson (Bilgore Beach Productions/Vasquez Coors/Godfrey Rotger)	3,600,000	17 March
The Last Frontier (Jager Productions/Don Sanders/Damon Minor)	12,000,000	6 May
Neilsa (Gill Seven Productions/First Sullivan Ryan Oliver/Polinsky Fisher)	4,000,000	7 July
My Brother Tom (Clarendon Productions/Rod Hardy/Pete Amers)	N/A	17 March
Nancy Wake (Simpson Le Messurier Films/Roger Simpson Roger Le Messurier/Hug Lennox)	3,000,000	1 December
Patrol (PBL Productions/Wob NeustMichael Cron)	3,047,000	2 February
Shark's Paradise (Memento Pty Ltd/Cara Kilmartin/Michael Jenkins)	1,000,000	29 May
The Shrimps (SAPC Productions/Bruce Mac/Douglas Ogilvie)	2,750,000	18 October
Tracy (PBL Productions/John Edwards Timothy Reed/Douglas Gordon, Kathy Austin)	4,500,000	March
Wetlands (Kareedy Miller/Tony Hayes/Doris Meeson John Dugan)	N/A	April
The Wind and the Stars (AFC, Aurora Television, Revolution Films/Ray Aches/Laurence Gordon Clark)	6,000,000	22 September

T E L E F E A T U R E S

TITLE (Production company/Producer/Director)	BUDGET	PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY
Altitudes (ABC/Julian Fingle/Dylan Fingle)	N/A	3 November
Army Wives (Roadshow Coors & Carols/Pete Vasquez/Doris Lennox)	1,600,000	23 June
The Blue Lightning (Roadshow Coors & Carols/Ross McEwen/Lee Philips)	2,500,000	11 January
Casals (Stereo Film Productions/Carl T. Woods/Carl T. Woods)	N/A	11 January
Casals (Carnegie Films/Craig Lahti Terry Jennings/Craig Lahti)	N/A	23 August
Facts of Life (Dunsmuir) (Nine/TV) Crawford/Film Color Mike Lakin/Stuart Margolin)	N/A	8 September
The Fish Are Safe (ABC/Mel Price/Rod MacLure)	N/A	5 May
Gallagher's Travels (Gallagher Productions/Walter Milles/Michael Coombs)	1,500,000	7 April
Heart of Words (Full Moon Films/Gary McFar/Gary McFar)	—	18 December
The Hour Before My Brother Dies (ABC/Mel Price/James Hayden)	N/A	24 February
Illegally Dumped Man (Capital Productions/Melinda Stein/Paul Rogers)	1,200,000	3 August
Hunger (ABC/Len Chapman/Douglas Wilkins)	N/A	28 February
Perhaps Love (ABC/Len Chapman/Len Wilkins)	N/A	20 June
A Place to Call Home (Embassy TV, Coastlands/Michael Lakin, Jeff Taylor, Ross Matthews/Kate Myberg)	N/A	5 May
Pursuit of Happiness (Jeopardy/Melinda Stein/Melinda Stein)	N/A	July
The Red Crescent (Somerset Film Productions/James M. Vernon, Jan Tyrrell/Henr Soltes)	N/A	17 November
Watch the Shadows Dance (Somerset Film Productions/James M. Vernon, Jan Tyrrell/Mel Jeff)	N/A	7 October

direct investment from the Australian Film Commission.

The average cost of a production was \$3 million. Five features and four miniseries were budgeted at over \$5 million. In fact, the average miniseries budget jumped from \$2,701,947 in 1985 to \$4,675,428 in 1986. It was another boom year for the portion of the market, with the McEwens' **The Last Frontier** one of the most notable (but only) successes in both Australia and overseas. The Road show, Coors & Carols production **The Blue Lightning** was the only telefeature in the over \$2 million bracket with most budgeted between \$1 and \$2 million.

Per category, the detailed breakdown is as follows:

TELEVISION FEATURES	
Total number produced	31
Total budgets	\$6,910,000
Average budget	2,261,374
Under \$1 million	6
\$1-\$2 million	4
\$2-\$3 million	9
\$3-\$4 million	4
\$4-\$5 million	1
Over \$5 million	5

TELEVISION MINISERIES	
Total number produced	1
Budget	\$ 970,077
MINISERIES	
Total number produced	14
Total budgets	\$2,458,000
Average budget	4,975,428
Under \$1 million	—
\$1-\$2 million	1
\$2-\$3 million	3
\$3-\$4 million	3
\$4-\$5 million	3
Over \$5 million	4

TELEFEATURAL	
Total number produced	10
ABC in-house productions	5
Total budgets (including ABC productions)	\$4,170,000
Average budget (including ABC productions)	1,181,000
Under \$1 million	3
\$1-\$2 million	7
\$2-\$3 million	1

Large ... 20 minutes
 Average ... 10 minutes
 Average ... 10 minutes
 Average ... 10 minutes

MAINE ARCHIOLOGY
 Final company ... Archio
 Producer ... Walter O. Brown
 Director ... Walter O. Brown
 Executive ... Walter O. Brown
 Script ... Walter O. Brown
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Archio

SMOKO
 Final company ... Smoko
 Producer ... Smoko
 Director ... Smoko
 Executive ... Smoko
 Script ... Smoko
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Smoko

GOVERNMENT FILM PRODUCTION PROMOTION AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA FILM PRODUCTION
 Final company ... Australia Film
 Producer ... Australia Film
 Director ... Australia Film
 Executive ... Australia Film
 Script ... Australia Film
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Australia Film

GUARD RIFLES
 Final company ... Guard Rifles
 Producer ... Guard Rifles
 Director ... Guard Rifles
 Executive ... Guard Rifles
 Script ... Guard Rifles
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Guard Rifles

MURRAY PRINCESS
 Final company ... Murray Princess
 Producer ... Murray Princess
 Director ... Murray Princess
 Executive ... Murray Princess
 Script ... Murray Princess
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Murray Princess

SUPERANIMALS
 Final company ... Superanimals
 Producer ... Superanimals
 Director ... Superanimals
 Executive ... Superanimals
 Script ... Superanimals
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Superanimals

GOVERNMENT FILM PRODUCTION C E S

CEC PROGRAMMES
 Final company ... CEC
 Producer ... CEC
 Director ... CEC
 Executive ... CEC
 Script ... CEC
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... CEC

TELEVISION PRE-PRODUCTION

ALWAYS AFTERNOON
 Final company ... Always Afternoon
 Producer ... Always Afternoon
 Director ... Always Afternoon
 Executive ... Always Afternoon
 Script ... Always Afternoon
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Always Afternoon

AROUND THE TOWN OF A CAT
 Final company ... Around the Town of a Cat
 Producer ... Around the Town of a Cat
 Director ... Around the Town of a Cat
 Executive ... Around the Town of a Cat
 Script ... Around the Town of a Cat
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Around the Town of a Cat

THE BARBERS
 Final company ... The Barbers
 Producer ... The Barbers
 Director ... The Barbers
 Executive ... The Barbers
 Script ... The Barbers
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... The Barbers

THE BUTCHER'S SON
 Final company ... The Butcher's Son
 Producer ... The Butcher's Son
 Director ... The Butcher's Son
 Executive ... The Butcher's Son
 Script ... The Butcher's Son
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... The Butcher's Son

THE COLORIST
 Final company ... The Colorist
 Producer ... The Colorist
 Director ... The Colorist
 Executive ... The Colorist
 Script ... The Colorist
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... The Colorist

PRODUCERS
 Final company ... Producers
 Producer ... Producers
 Director ... Producers
 Executive ... Producers
 Script ... Producers
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Producers

PRODUCERS
 Final company ... Producers
 Producer ... Producers
 Director ... Producers
 Executive ... Producers
 Script ... Producers
 Length ... 10 minutes
 Synopsis ... Producers

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Chief of staff	Max Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Marketing	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Finance	Thomas Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Human resources	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Legal	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Information systems	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Plant manager	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Executive assistant	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Project	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
General manager	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.
Administrative assistant	James Hargrove Hargrove Inc.

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Category	First Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority
Health and Safety	1.00	0.80	0.60
Education	0.90	0.70	0.50
Environment	0.80	0.60	0.40
Transportation	0.70	0.50	0.30
Public Works	0.60	0.40	0.20
Police	0.50	0.30	0.10
Fire	0.40	0.20	0.10
Public Health	0.30	0.10	0.05
Other	0.20	0.10	0.05

11. **QUESTION** The following table shows the number of people who have been convicted of a crime in the United States from 1990 to 2000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 1990 was 1,000,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2000 was 1,500,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 1995 was 1,250,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2005 was 1,750,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2010 was 2,000,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2015 was 2,250,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2020 was 2,500,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2025 was 2,750,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2030 was 3,000,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2035 was 3,250,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2040 was 3,500,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2045 was 3,750,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2050 was 4,000,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2055 was 4,250,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2060 was 4,500,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2065 was 4,750,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2070 was 5,000,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2075 was 5,250,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2080 was 5,500,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2085 was 5,750,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2090 was 6,000,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2095 was 6,250,000. The number of people convicted of a crime in the United States in 2100 was 6,500,000.

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1000

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Bicycle      ... .. 1000000
Tennis      ... ..   50000
Length      ... ..    1000
Weight      ... ..     100
Year (avg.) ... ..      10
Aggregate the above statistics into a
plot and bar chart feature

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Synopsis: *Don't Buy Madonnas in the Streets* is a collection of 100 short stories, essays, drawings, and photographs that trace Madonna's career from her early days in the streets of New York City to her current status as a global icon. The book is a tribute to the artist and a celebration of her impact on popular culture.

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Keywords: The choice, advantage, step, 3
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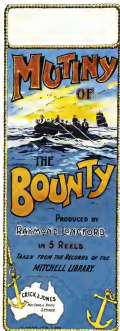


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